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MAN'S DUTY TO HIS NEIGHBOUR

IN A SERIES OF

ELEVEN PRIZE ESSAYS,

BY

WORKING MEN AND WOMEN OF THE COUNTY OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

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TO

THOMAS ROCHESTER, ESQ.,

THIS SERIES OF

ESSAYS BY WORKING MEN AND WOMEN,

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY

THE PUBLISHERS.

INTRODUCTION.

In the beginning of the year 1858, Thomas Rochester, Esq., of Whalton, by advertisement in the local newspapers, announced that prizes to the amount of £100 would be given for the best Five Essays on "Man's Duty to God," to be Written by Working Men or Women, residing in the County of Northumberland. For these prizes there were fifty-four competitors; and the successful Essays were published in the course of the same year.

At the commencement of the present year (1859), the same gentleman offered prizes to the same amount for the best Essays on "Man's Duty to his Neighbour," to be Written by Members of the same Class. For these prizes there were fifty-six competitors, and the Eleven Essays comprised in the present volume are those to which the adjudicators awarded the prizes.

It is the object of the following Essays to indicate, as briefly and plainly as possible, what our duty is, and the conditions necessary for its performance. They are produced by those who belong to the humble walks of life, and who are dependent on their own labour for the bread that perisheth. This position is, perhaps, an advantage in dealing with the subject under consideration, as it enables the writer to take a practical view of the subject, guided of course by the light shed from the Holy Scriptures. Imperfections are to be found in each Essay; but it may be that the deficiencies of one are supplied by some other writer. In presenting these Essays, therefore, besides the usefulness of showing the capacities of the working classes, a complete compendium is presented of the whole range of that most momentous matter—*Man's Duty to his Neighbour*,—and in the hope that their perusal will waken minds, now dormant, to reflection and action in the cause of God, their fellow men, and themselves, we give this work to the world.

MAN'S DUTY TO HIS NEIGHBOUR.

ESSAY I.

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it.

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.—MATT. xxii. 37, 38, 39.

IN the above passage the Divine Teacher enunciates, in terms the most comprehensive and complete, the great and paramount duties of man; firstly, his duty to the great Being, to whose creative power and benevolence he owes his existence, his high destiny, and all those great intellectual and moral powers and affections which pre-eminently distinguish him; and secondly, his duty to his neighbour, whom he is

commanded to love as himself. And in considering these great precepts, it is worthy of particular note, as shewing the solemn nature of man's duty to man, that the same expressive term, *love*, is carried from the first to the second commandment, thus interweaving, as it were, and rendering inseparable, man's duty to God and to his neighbour. And, indeed, the two duties are inseparable.

The love of God, in the exercise of which we are commanded to exert the whole energy of our souls, differs only in degree from the love due to our neighbour. The love of God is that feeling of intense reverence and veneration which fills and animates the mind of man when in communion with the great Author of his being, the contemplation of whose attributes of infinite power, of wisdom, of goodness, and of mercy, naturally moves the soul to feelings of devotion more profound than all other objects of human meditation. Man's love to his neighbour is a sentiment necessarily less exalted and intense, and exhibits itself in acts and feelings of kindness, good-will, friendship, affection, tenderness, and the like. But though these latter duties are of a more humble nature, their full performance is not the less necessary, as we have seen, to meet the requirements of

God's will. It is true that upon man have been lavished the choicest gifts of God's goodness. Endowed with an immortal soul, his destiny stretches into and connects him with eternity. Honours and privileges unknown to earth he is invited and entreated to accept, upon conditions, involving, indeed, much self-denial and spiritual discipline, but the faithful performance of which is not only quite within his power, but conducts him by the paths of peace, to the blissful presence of his Maker. In the powers of his mind, also, which enable him to contemplate, with wonder and delight, the countless evidences of Divine wisdom, goodness and power displayed in the stupendous works of the visible world, and teach him to look up from these to the great Source and Author of them all, we see how pre-eminently man has been distinguished. But notwithstanding all these high honours and exalted capabilities, man is, in many respects, a feeble and helpless being, and constantly in need of external aid and assistance. In his health and strength he needs this succour; in his infancy, sickness and old age it is indispensable to his being. If it had pleased God, man might have been gifted with powers within himself to serve all the purposes of his worldly existence; but unerring wisdom and

goodness has ordained it otherwise, and out of man's necessities springs man's duty to man, and the Divine command "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Since, then, man owes to his fellow-man a duty second in importance only to that which he owes to his Maker, and the due performance of which, as a Divine command, is equally obligatory upon him, let us now direct our attention to those peculiar obligations which make up man's duty to his neighbour.—And first as to

JUSTICE.

"The just man walketh in his integrity; his children are blessed after him."—Prov. xx. 7.

The union of all the virtues in one person constitutes moral perfection. The connection of the virtues is so intimate and indissoluble; they are so closely allied in their nature and object, that any neglect or violation of one, vitiates, to the same extent, the whole character. A man may, for instance, in the ordinary sense of the word, be *just*, but if to his justice he does not add *mercy*, his character is defective; in other words, he falls short of his duty to his neighbour, and therefore to God. But perhaps, of

all the virtues, there is not one upon the due observance of which the happiness and welfare of man so largely depend as that of justice. Justice has been defined to be "the virtue by which we give to every man what is his due, and must necessarily, therefore, include in its exercise the obligations of honour, honesty, fidelity, and truth. It would be impossible to particularise what in all cases is a man's due, but there are few positions in which any man can be placed relatively to another man in which their recpective rights and obligations may not be ascertained by the application of a rule which is of universal application. I allude to the all-embracing precept of our Lord, "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you." If an individual enters into a lawful contract with another to do any specific act, he is bound in justice to fulfil it. If he contracts a debt, he must pay it. If, for a consideration, he enters into an engagement to serve another, either by the labour of his hands or his head, he cannot avoid the terms of such an engagement without the sacrifice of his character for justice. The duties of the contracting parties are, of course, reciprocal. These are examples of positive duties. There are negative duties, also, which are equally obligatory upon every man, and these impose upon him the necessity of abstinence from evil. They restrain him from the indulgence in slander, or doing any other act by

which his neighbour may in anywise be injured, by the loss of his just rights, his honour, his reputation, or peace of mind. The one set of duties are what are called active duties, which we must perform; the others are passive, and withold us from transgression. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," commands the performance of an active duty. "Thou shalt not steal," forbids the commission of an unlawful act, and is a passive duty. To neglect the observance of either of these commands is a violation of our duty to our neighbour, and is at variance with the precept, "Do unto others as as ye would that they should do unto you."

The poet has said "An honest man is the noblest work of God"; and, although I would humbly suggest that a godly man is still more worthy of the appellation, yet we must admit that honesty, considered in its most extended sense—as comprehending the qualities of uprightness, truth, sincerity, chastity, justice, and righteousness—is a virtue into the composition of which enter some of the best and most amiable qualities which dignify human nature. Honesty does not comprehend the homage due from man to his Maker, but it does comprehend some of the most important duties which man owes to his fellow-man, and the due fulfilment of which is not only highly acceptable to heaven, but secures to him who makes its requirements the rule of his life, the confidence

and esteem of all men. Honesty is admirable in all ranks and conditions of men, but in the poor and needy it is more particularly so. The honest poor man is an object of pleasing contemplation. He presents a picture of virtue in the midst of the strongest temptations to vice. Preferring the purity of his soul, and the manly independence of self-reliance to the allurements of all those tempting, but unlawful enjoyments which his necessities continually expose him to, we trace in his virtuous fortitude some of the highest qualities which add lustre to human nature. There is a calm dignity about such a man: the smile of heaven rests upon him, and the reverence of good men imparts a joy to his heart.

But, fully to appreciate the practical importance of the virtue of justice, let us briefly consider the sad consequences which would result from its general neglect. Suppose that, in violation of God's express command, and of natural equity, mankind should universally and systematically act upon the principle of withholding from, instead of giving to every man "what is his due," what would then be the state of the world? Justice secures to every man protection to life, the undisturbed enjoyment of the fruits of his honest industry, and the advantages of an unsullied reputation. These are blessings of the first magnitude; but under the rule of universal injustice they would be swept away in a whirlwind of uncontrolled lust and

lawless passion. Civil society would be impracticable; the progress of civilization would be arrested; might would be substituted for right—lawless violence and rapine for peace and security; and man, at war with his fellow-man, harassed and outraged, would have to seek in a state of nature such a measure of security as chance, or his own physical powers and mental subtelty, might enable him to maintain against the machinations of his enemies.

These considerations, while they force us to admire the divine goodness in commanding us to love our neighbour as ourselves, exhibit to us at the same time the vital importance of justice as one of the duties which man owes to man.

It has been said that "self-love and social is the same," and, considering it as a general principle, there can be no question of its soundness. Society has been established and exists for the public good. Under its protecting mantle, man seeks to enjoy, in his person and his property, that security which can only be attained under the dominion of just and equitable laws, framed to restrain the violent and unjust; and to protect the peaceable and well-disposed. And such being the great object and substantial blessings of the social union, if a man would duly consider his own interest he would see that it is closely identified with that of the community of which he is a mem-

ber, and would carefully avoid the commission of any act which might in the slightest degree tend to weaken its authority, or subvert its foundations. He would perceive that when he commits a breach of the laws framed for the general good, he not only invades the rights of his neighbour, but forfeits or endangers his own. Honesty, in this as in all other cases, is the best policy; a man may, by injustice, appropriate the goods of another to his own use, and if he escape the punishment due to the outrage, may appear, in a worldly sense, to be a gainer. But is he really so? Is the voice of conscience which is ever disturbing the rest of the unjust, not to be set against his fancied gain? And if its still small voice should not in him be the enemy to repose which it is to ordinary humanity, can he contemplate without a shudder, the frown of that Being, who from the throne of Omnipotence, has commanded him to be just in all things, and to love his neighbour as himself?

TRUTH.

"The lip of truth shall be established for 'ever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment."—PROV. xii. 19.

Truthfulness is another duty which man owes

to his neighbour. To be without truth, is to be without sincerity and honesty; and in the absence of these qualities or dispositions of the mind it is difficult to conceive how any one virtue can exist. We speak the truth when our words are in conformity with our thoughts; when our language does not give expression to our real sentiments, we speak falsehood, which is the contrary of truth. To speak a deliberate untruth, therefore, is dishonest, and a mischievous abuse of the power of speech, which is a faculty conferred by the Creator upon man alone, and to whose nature, as a rational, progressive and accountable being it is peculiarly fitted.

To be truthful and sincere, therefore, is not only an indispensable duty we owe to God, but is inseparable from the duty which we owe to our fellow-men. Falsehood and insincerity are the instruments of fraud and treachery, and are the natural resource of the worthless and base only. They can never be resorted to but for bad purposes—to deceive and betray. We pray to be delivered from "envy, hatred, and malice," and the indulgence of these bad passions will generally be found to be the ruling motive of the false and insincere. It is the policy of the honest man, in all his acts, words and deeds, to

be direct and consistent. He has no unworthy purpose to serve, and desires only to appear as he really is. He needs no disguise, because he has no motive for concealment. Deceit discovers, not only a dishonest, but a little mind. It discovers mental cowardice, and this cowardice is a natural concomitant of guilt. It seeks, by practising the low arts of dissimulation, to secure a larger amount of personal advantage than would fall to the share of candour and truth. It forgets that the little artifices of cunning are constantly exposed to the risk of detection and exposure, and discovers, when too late, that an open, candid, and manly conduct is not only the duty of a rational and responsible being, but is also the only sure and legitimate road to permanent worldly advantage and distinction. It sacrifices great and lasting interests to the petty gains of the hour. Its triumphs are "but for a moment," and its ultimate destiny, disgrace, and humiliation. The very arts by which deceit seeks to conceal its designs are frequently the most certain means of its detection. It pays homage to virtue by assuming its garb, but that garb hangs upon it in stubborn and ungraceful folds. Art is substituted for nature, but nature will not suffer long her rights to be infringed; and when she asserts

her prerogative, she exposes her false votary to all the scorn and shame of detected fraud. God has forbidden the vice of deceit, and has provided for it its fitting punishment, even in this world. Where there is no respect for truth, there is no security for fidelity. Mankind are sagacious enough to see this; and the habitual liar, when once discovered, reaps the meet reward of his faithlessness in the scorn, mistrust, and contempt of the world. And is a man who has voluntarily brought himself into so unenviable a position as this not a very pitiable spectacle? He is in a great measure shut out from human sympathy. If his talents are ever so good, those talents are regarded, in him, but as so many instruments of mischief. He is regarded as unfit for any office of trust. If he is unjustly accused, his protestations of innocence avail him nothing, for he is not believed even when he speaks the truth. And without human sympathy and confidence, what is a man's life but a prolonged misery?

Let us learn, then, scrupulously to guard against the temptations to dishonesty, that we may cultivate the virtues of truth and sincerity, bearing constantly in mind that "the lip of truth shall be established for ever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment."

Having briefly discussed those duties which our reason teaches us are due from man to man, and the neglect or infringement of which involves a violation of natural justice, we have now to consider the other duties imposed upon us by the will of God, as expressed in the Holy Scriptures.

Prior to the revelation of God's will, man might easily have been tempted to believe that to regulate his intercourse with his fellow-man by the principles of justice, honesty, candour, and truth, would be to fulfil all the obligations incumbent upon him. His unassisted reason would probably suggest to him such reflections as the following, when considering the limits of his duty to his neighbour:—"I have given to every man what was his due, and withheld nothing from him to which he was entitled. I have not taken away or endangered the life of any man, neither have I subjected him to any bodily or mental pain, unwarrantably. I have not been guilty of oppression, injustice, dishonesty, falsehood, scandal, distraction, or any other offence against my neighbour. He has had full justice at my hands. What further claim can he have upon me? If he is in sickness, can that sickness be traced to any misconduct of mine? and, if not, is the alleviation

of his suffering any part of my duty? If he is in want, am I bound, even out of my abundance, to relieve his necessities? What I possess has been fairly acquired, and is my own; and to squander the fruits of my honest industry upon those upon whom fortune has frowned, would be a stretch of generosity quite beyond the limits of duty." And thus wrapped up in self-ishness, and self-sufficiency, the proper sequel of such reflections, would be the exclamation of the Pharisee, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, &c."

But God requires at our hands much more than bare justice towards our neighbour. He exacts other duties, the performance of which is not less necessary to the securing of His blessing. If God should judge us by the rule of strict justice, in what position would even the best of mankind stand? We all fall far short of our duty to Him, and if we escape the punishment due to our transgressions, we shall owe this to the mercy and goodness, and not to the justice of our Maker. Let us, then, turn to the consideration of a few of the other duties which man owes to his neighbour; and, in treating of these, let us constantly bear in mind that they are not such duties as we may, at pleasure, leave unperformed, but that they are

the commands of God, and cannot be neglected or spurned without incurring the penalty attached to wilful disobedience.

BENEVOLENCE.

"Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love."—Rom. xii. 10.

If the wants and the sufferings of mankind arose altogether from preventible causes, our duty to God would still impose upon us the obligation of, in some measurse, supplying the one and relieving the other. That duty will not allow us to withhold our compassion even from the wilfully improvident and vicious. To the good and virtuous we owe respect and reverence; to the evil and vicious, that compassion and consideration which are due to human beings whose misfortune it is to be at war with their Maker and their fellow-men. But although a large proportion of the suffering which exists in the world springs immediately, or remotely, from a disregard of the laws of our nature, and an indulgence in vices destructive to health and happiness, it is equally certain that if no such thing as vice or immorality existed, a large amount of privation, and mental and bodily pain and distress, would

still continue to vex and harass the human family. The unavoidable conditions of life embrace helplessness, sickness, distress, suffering, and death. From the whole of these evils no man can hope to escape. There are natural differences of constitution, both moral and physical; and to some falls a larger share of health, worldly prosperity, and happiness, than to others; but the most enviable state of life is by no means exempt from some of the infirmities and miseries which cling to human nature, and which render perfect earthly happiness impossible. We are all helpless in infancy; and to old age belongs the impotency of an exhausted frame and worn-out powers. The robust and strong, from their entrance into the world to their departure from it, have to depend upon others for many of the necessaries, the luxuries, and enjoyments of life; the weak and infirm, "the halt, the lame, and the blind," have to depend, in a still larger measure, upon the same external aid. Our duties are thus made to spring out of our necessities. The measure of our duty to our fellow-creatures is the extent of their wants; and to mankind generally, and more particularly to the poor and necessitous, God commands that this duty shall be cheerfully and faithfully performed.

Benevolence is that disposition of the mind which delights in doing good to others. This feeling, in individuals, may be natural to the heart; it may spring, in others, from a sense of duty to God; or it may be the result of these causes combined. From whatever source it may arise, it is very certain that it differs very much in degree and intensity in different minds. Few are totally destitute of it. In mankind generally it exists to a considerable extent. It is the distinguishing characteristic of a few. Among this latter class may be ranked a Howard, a Wilberforce, a Clarkson, a Romilly, and a Florence Nightingale. All these individuals enjoy a high reputation for active benevolence. Their respective spheres of action were different, but the leading purpose of their several lives was the alleviation of human suffering, or the elevation of human nature.

Every man of benevolent mind does not enjoy those advantages of ability, wealth, social position, and opportunities of leisure which enabled these philanthropists so effectually to give effect to their noble designs; but there is no position in life, however humble, which does not afford some means and opportunities of practically carrying out the Christian obligation of benevolence. The field of labour is extensive, and

embraces duties, manifold and onerous, indeed, but which the poor and lowly, as well as the rich and exalted, may freely share in. To feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to free the captive, to minister to the wants of the sick and dying, to whisper consolation to the sorrowing, to sympathise with the unfortunate, to admonish the vicious, to reclaim the wicked, to encourage the righteous, to chide the wayward and self-willed, to impart wisdom to the ignorant, to warn the disobedient, to assist the struggling, to raise the fallen, to comfort the widow and support the orphan, to infuse hope into the despairing and courage into the desponding,—these are among the more prominent labours of love which Benevolence voluntarily imposes upon itself. Human happiness is the object of those labours, and the blessing of Heaven their reward.

It has been said that our charitable and benevolent institutions are the glory of our land. And so, indeed, they are. Our hospitals, infirmaries, dispensaries, and reformatories; our asylums for the deaf and dumb and the blind; our educational and religious institutions; our home and foreign missionary and tract and Bible societies, and Sunday-schools;—these are a few of the channels through which the

streams of national benevolence flow; and the amount of human happiness which is promoted, and the amount of human suffering relieved, through their instrumentality, while they afford to Englishmen just grounds of pride and satisfaction, strikingly manifest, at the same time, the blessed fruits of obedience to the Divine command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

It is needless to observe that if mankind were to make self-aggrandisement the ruling passion of their lives, no institutions of the kind above mentioned would exist, unless, indeed, they were called into existence by that stern necessity which sometimes bends the stubborn will of selfishness, and impels it to the discharge of a duty, disagreeable to its nature, but the performance of which may be the means of averting still greater evils—the evils of insecurity and danger. Happily, however, although mankind generally are greatly influenced by motives of self-love (and that they are so is doubtless a wise provision of Providence), yet there are very few so wholly absorbed in selfishness as practically to ignore those neighbourly and social offices which man owes to his fellow-man.

The condition of mind above adverted to is directly opposite to benevolence, and is that to

which we give the name of selfishness, covetousness, or avarice, and perhaps we may, not unprofitably, devote a little consideration to a passion so much opposed to the genius of Christianity and the true interests of man.—It is a passion of the meanest and most sordid kind. It is devoted to self-indulgence, but its enjoyments are of the most contracted and fleeting nature. Self-aggrandisement is its aim and study, and disappointment its reward. It is a passion the indulgence of which yields no lasting pleasure, because its gains tend only to the increase of desire. The gratification of its present cravings adds to the number of its future necessities. It is therefore a tormenting passion—fretful, uneasy, and dissatisfied. It has no bowels of compassion, and can therefore claim no human sympathy. In its nature there is nothing self-sustaining, and the world looks down upon it with cold disdain—mixed, perhaps, with a little of that pity which is due to the blindness of inordinate self-love, and perverted affections.

In the character of the habitual gamester we have a striking exemplification of the danger of giving ourselves up to the dominion of the selfish passions. That the love of gaming has its root in avarice admits of no doubt. The gamester is dissatisfied with what he has, and

seeks to appropriate the property of others to his own use, and this without rendering back any equivalent. The generous man delights in the reciprocation of friendly offices; the study of the gamester is to enrich himself, with the spoils of those whom he deems less knowing than himself. Whether he trusts to his own superior skill, or the favors of what is called fortune or good luck, the desire of his heart always is to transfer from his neighbour's pocket to his own that which does not belong to him; and such a motive as this, if not dishonest, is close upon the confines of dishonesty.

What we have chiefly to consider here, however, are a few of the consequences to which the practice of gaming inevitably leads. One of its immediate and unavoidable consequences is the destruction of friendship and good-will; for how can the man who has been impoverished or reduced to beggary look upon the author of his ruin with feelings other than those of dislike and hatred?

The unhallowed gains of the successful gamester are generally expended in the indulgence of passions the most gross and debasing. And this need excite no wonder, for the feeling of covetousness, from which the vice of gaming

springs, will never be found associated in the mind with the nobler aspirations of our nature. The instincts of the gamester are grovelling, and find their proper gratification in the immoderate indulgence of the animal appetites. His immediate gains, therefore, are generally ultimate loss, even to himself; and the example of his bad life taints the moral atmosphere with the elements of a spreading pestilence.

Turning from the contemplation of the successful to the unsuccessful gamester, what a sadpicture is presented to our view! If the mere loss of worldly substance were the only consequence resulting from unsuccessful gaming, this in itself would be lamentable enough; but the records of the world and our daily experience teach us that this is only one of the smallest of the long train of evils to which the vice of gaming gives birth. From the same source spring shame, remorse, recklessness, misery, envy, hatred, malice, and all those bad passions which poison the well-spring of life, and drive their unhappy victims to the perpetration of the black and unnatural crimes which stain the annals of the world. Among those crimes may be enumerated self-destruction,—that sad resort of the miserable, and the thoroughly depraved!—and

murder, that other monster offspring of unrestrained and lawless passion, which, violating all laws, human and divine, usually expiates its offence, so far as this world is concerned, at the gallows—an instrument of punishment horrible in itself, but which exhibits to our eyes the not less horrible spectacle of a man, in cool blood and for hire, strangling his fellow-man.

The pertinency of the foregoing remarks on the selfish passions to the subject under consideration will easily be perceived. Constituted as we are, we cannot have too many or too powerful motives to the practice of that active benevolence which God demands at our hands as one of the duties due from us to our neighbour; and if, in our endeavours to enforce this duty, we should content ourselves with merely setting forth the advantages arising from its observance, without exposing the evil consequences of its neglect, we should leave our task but half performed. Comparatively few follow virtue for virtue's sake; the many require the restraining influence arising from the dread of punishment.

MERCY.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.—MATT. v. 7.

When we consider the very imperfect man-

ner in which we perform our duty to our Maker, the many sins of omission and commission of which we are constantly guilty, surely we have weighty reasons for thankfulness and gratitude to Him for that goodness and forbearance which exempts us from the speedy punishment so righteously due to our transgressions! To serve God is a condition of our being; we neglect, or very imperfectly perform the condition, but immediate deprivation of existence is not the penalty of our faithlessness. On the contrary; he vouchsafes to us the continued enjoyment of that life, the duties of which we so ungratefully disregard, and this immunity from the punishment due to our offences we owe to the tender mercy and long-suffering of that Being, who, touched with a sense of our infirmities, withholds the blow which justice might so rightfully inflict.

Since, then, we owe so much to the mercy of God, when he commands us to be merciful one to another, can we violate the sacred precept without putting him at defiance, and exhibiting at the same time an example of the most shameless ingratitude? In the form of prayer prescribed by our Lord himself are the words, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." Can the

cruel or vindictive man utter this appeal to the throne of grace without impiety? The words themselves show that our forgiveness of others is made the condition of our own forgiveness, "forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." To neglect the duty of mercy to our neighbour, therefore, would appear, to deprive us of the right even to ask for that forgiveness so needful to us all, and upon which our eternal destiny must depend.

"Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see,
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me."

POPE.

No doubt every man meets with much in his intercourse with the world that is but too well calculated to cause him pain and irritation, without just cause, and that under the smart of undeserved oppression, he may feel it difficult to suppress a rising feeling of resentment; but it should ever be remembered that if there were no temptations to vice, there could be no virtue, for what is virtue in its highest sense but resistance of evil? The highest triumphs of virtue are those which are gained over the

strongest temptations to vice. Self-sacrifice is the only true merit, for it acts in opposition to natural inclination. If we resist aggression in the spirit of retaliation, we only obey the bad impulses of our nature, and have no virtue in the Christian sense of the term. The laws of society provide the punishment due to great outrages, and we ought to postpone the punishment of the smaller offences till we are free from them ourselves. The obligations of mercy, like those of charity and the other Christian graces, considered abstractedly as a duty which man owes to his neighbour, have their source in the weakness and imperfection of our common nature. If men were intellectually and morally perfect, the term mercy would have no significance. If man's understanding were free from error, and his heart from the influence of evil, there could be no transgression, and therefore nothing upon which the tenderness and clemency of mercy could exercise itself. The understanding of man, however, has its limits, and the better affections of his heart are too easily tempted to yield to the solicitations of the evil passions, and the office of mercy is, to treat with lenity the errors of the head, and to soften the rigour of punishment with which justice would visit the offences of the heart.

A merciful behaviour, then, in all our dealings with the world, is a duty of gratitude to God, and of humanity to our fellow-men. It is a duty of humanity to our fellow-men because all of us are transgressors, either positively, by doing those things which we ought not to do; or, negatively, by leaving undone those things which we ought to do; and as all are offenders, differing only in degree, all must depend, more or less, upon the mercy of those who have cause of offence against us. And it must be from a consciousness of this general imperfection that arises that feeling of universal reverence with which great examples of mercy are regarded. The cruel and revengeful themselves regard with admiration, if not with a softened heart, that god-like virtue which obliterates from the memory the sense of great injuries with a benignant smile of mingled tenderness, clemency, and pardon. The highest example of mercy recorded in the annals of the world is the prayer breathed by our Saviour upon the cross for his murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" and dead to all the tender sympathies of our nature must be the man who can contemplate such a wonderful exhibition of benignity and tenderness, under bodily tortures the most excruciating, without

a feeling of the profoundest reverence. This indeed, was an example of mercy more than human; but it is difficult to conceive what purpose it was meant to serve, if not to teach us the duty of mercy and forbearance towards those who may trespass against us.

All the commands of God are the utterances of divine love. The duty of mercy is included in those commands, and to appreciate its importance to the well-being of mankind, even in a worldly sense, we have only to consider a few of the more prominent of the evils which must inevitably spring out of its neglect. Where there is no mercy, there can be no forgiveness; and where there is no forgiveness there must be hatred and revenge. And what are the effects of these bad passions? Their first effect is to punish those who yield themselves up to their power. Human happiness depends largely upon that unruffled serenity of temper which peace and good-will alone can secure. The revengeful man is a stranger to this state of bliss. He is tormented by a sense of injury, real or imaginary. By pardoning the offence his mind would be restored to its wonted composure; he takes the opposite course, and seeks amends by retaliating the injury; and the more scope he gives to this unhappy disposition of

the mind, the more is his misery increased. To the pains of the original offence he adds those which he inflicts upon himself. He takes a viper to his bosom, and the more he fondles and caresses it, the more deadly becomes its bite.—Such being the effect of a revengeful feeling in its passive mood, we have next to consider its consequences when developed in action. For these consequences we have not far to seek. They may be found in our domestic broils; in the assaults, cuttings, maimings, and murders which disturb the peace of society, and stain our criminal annals. They may be traced to those places provided by the nation for the temporal punishment and correction of such crimes and misdemeanours as are perpetrated in open defiance of the laws of God, and in contempt of the laws of man—our goals and other penal institutions; and at the gallows itself we may learn the awful danger of giving up to the government of lawless passions, those affections of the soul which ought to be regulated and controlled by the commands of God and the counsels of virtue and wisdom.

TEMPERANCE.

"Temperance is an admirable quality, even as peace is a blessing."—JERROLD.

We apply the term temperate to a man who

keeps his appetites and mind within the limits of reason and moderation. Temperance, therefore, is opposed to gluttony and drunkenness, and excesses of all kinds.

This is a duty which we are too apt to look upon as one which relates only to man as an individual, and the observance or non-observance of which concerns himself alone. But this is a mischievous error. Men, living in society, have duties in addition to those which they owe to themselves, and responsibilities, the disregard of which affects, not themselves only, but others. To men, generally, attach the duties of husbands, fathers, sons, and brothers; and in addition to these are the public or social duties, the performance of which is equally binding upon them. To discharge all those duties faithfully and efficiently is a duty which every one owes to the society of which he is a member; but how he is to do this without the cultivation of temperate habits, is a problem difficult of solution. Of the horrible results of intemperance generally, and of drunkenness in particular, we have too many and sad examples in the history of mankind, and in our daily experience. "In the house of a drunkard," says Cobbett, "there is no happiness for any one, All is uncertainty and anxiety. He is not the same man for any one

day at a time. No one knows anything of his outgoings or of his in-comings. When he will rise or when lay down to rest is wholly a matter of chance. Whether he will be laughing or sullen at his return to his home no one can tell. At sometimes he is one man, at other times another. His time is chiefly divided between raving and melancholy. Well might the Apostle warn his disciples not to sit down at table with drunkards; for, leaving the sin of drunkenness itself out of the question, what is so intolerable as the babble of a drunken man? What so uncertain as the consequences of communication with him? This minute he shakes you by the hand; the next he seeks your life; and the only recompense you receive for the injuries he inflicts is, an acknowledgment that, at the time of committing the injury, he had voluntarily put himself upon a level with the brute."—*The Sin of Drunkenness.*

"Intemperance," says Mr. W. R. Baker, "is at once the grave of every virtue, and the hotbed of every rank and obnoxious vice. It not only paralyses all that is good, but gives extraordinary vigour to all that is evil. It not only deadens every moral sensibility, but excites into life and activity every animal passion that is opposed to morality and human happiness. The history of *crime* is little more than the history

of intemperance; for, in all ages and countries in which it has prevailed, it has either been the chief exciting cause of evil actions, or has given to evil conduct a virulence and atrocity of which it would otherwise have been destitute. Our prisons, our penitentiaries, our convict-ships, and penal settlements, are little else than the receptacles of the miserable slaves and victims of intemperance; but the number of our public criminals—of individuals whose misconduct, arising out of their intemperance, has subjected them to the penalties of public law and justice—bears but a small proportion to the number of those who, although they have never appeared at the bar of their country, are an especial curse to their families, and an injurious incumbrance to the community to which they belong."—*Intemperance, the Idolatry of Britain*, page 35.

"The places of judicature which I have long held in this kingdom have given me an opportunity to observe the original cause of most of the enormities that have been committed for the space of near twenty years; and by a due observation I have found, that if the murders and manslaughters, the burglaries and robberies, the riots and tumults, the adulteries, fornications, rapes, and other great enormities that have

happened in that time, were divided into five parts, four of them have been the issues and products of excessive drinking—of tavern or ale-house meetings."—*Judge Hale's Advice to his Grandchildren.*

As it was in Hale's day, so is it at present. Our judges of assize periodically bear testimony to horrible mass of crime which springs out of the debasing vice of excessive drinking.

Temperance, then, is clearly one of the most important duties which man owes to his neighbour. The above quotations graphically and truthfully depict the criminal and destructive consequences of its neglect; and those consequences, it will have been seen, comprehend almost every injury, every lawless ond wicked outrage, which it is possible for the most brutal and depraved to inflict upon their fellow-creatures. And, considering that temperance is not only pleasing to God, and beneficial to neighbour, but that it is also productive of health, strength, worldly respect and happiness to ourselves, surely we can have no higher motives to incite us to its scrupulous observance.

GRATITUDE TO BENEFACTORS.

"Withold not good from them to whom it is due,

when it is in the power of thine hand to do it."—PROV. iii. 27.

If we are forbidden to return evil for evil: if we are even required to pray for them who persecute and injure us, then surely the feeling of gratitude to benefactors is a duty which ought to be performed with a willing and cheerful heart. "As the branches of a tree," says an ancient writer, "return their sap to the root from whence it arose; as a river poureth his streams to the sea, where his spring was supplied; so the heart of a grateful man delighteth in returning a benefit received." The absence of this feeling is ingratitude; and ingratitude is justly held to be the blackest of vices. In its least offensive shape it receives favours with a cold and thankless heart. Its more hideous features are seen in returning evil for good—in biting the hand that has been busied in efforts to promote our comfort and happiness. Its effect is to check the exercise of charity and benevolence; for, although the strongest motive to the exercise of these virtues ought to be a sense of duty to God, still this circumstance does not lessen the obligation we are under, gratefully to acknowledge, and, to the best of our ability, to reciprocate those offices of friendship and good-

will from the exercise of which we derive any substantial advantage. To fail in this duty is to discourage the generous and kind-hearted, whose happiness is increased in proportion to the amount of happiness they confer upon others. If we cannot make a return commensurate with the benefit we have received, duty forbids us to withold from benefactors the tribute of a grateful heart. The tear of gratitude is as amiable as the tear of pity. The ungrateful man is not only unfitted to perform the duties which he owes to his neighbour, but would appear to be insensible to the obligations which he owes to his Maker. The grateful man on the contrary, loves his generous and kind-hearted neighbour, and traces every blessing through the Agent to the Disposer of all hearts!

CHARITY.

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."—Rom. xiii. 8.

From the definitions we have of what charity is, and what it is not, we are irresistibly led to the conclusion that it comprehends, within itself, the whole of the Christian graces. It not only manifests itself actively, in acts of

tenderness, kindness, love, good-will, benevolence, liberality to the poor, and the like; but, passively, in chastity of thought and feeling. It is a state of mind in which all the affections of the heart are in subjection to the will of God, and yield a cheerful and undeviating obedience to His laws. And a condition of mind so exalted and spiritual as this, must necessarily discover itself in a universal love of the human family, and a tenderness towards all created things capable of being, in any way, affected by our actions.

"The soul, thus kindled from above,
Spreads wide her arms of universal love;
And still enlarged as she receives the grace,
Includes creation in her close embrace."—COWPER.

To be without charity, therefore, is to be totally unfit to perform any one of the Christian duties which man owes to his neighbour, or, in other words, to his fellow-creatures. St. Paul, in the 1. Cor. xiii. 3., says, "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." And in the four following verses he tells us, not only what this, the greatest of the Christian virtues is, but what it is not. "Charity suffereth long, and is

kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." From uncharitableness spring all the evils which disgrace and afflict the human race — those evils only excepted which are unavoidable conditions of our being. From envy alone issues a long train of mischiefs, for it is closely allied with hatred and malice. The consequences of rash judgment need not be dwelt upon. A rash judgment has broken the heart of many an innocent man, and sent him to an untimely grave. But to attempt to set forth the many bad fruits of uncharitableness would carry me far beyond the prescribed limits of this essay. I shall, therefore, conclude with the expression of a heartfelt hope and prayer, that as charity is Christian love, and Christian love the "fulfilment of the law," its requirements may be made the rule of our conduct towards our neighbour; so that, when our earthly being draws near to a close, and visions of eternity present themselves to our earnest meditation, we may contemplate the inevitable change of

existence with a calm conscience, and with that cheering hope of future bliss which a consciousness of innocence and a well-spent life are best calculated to inspire.

ROBERT CRAKE.

ESSAY II.

INTRODUCTION.

All the duties and obligations under which we are placed are due to God and our neighbour; properly we owe all duty to God, for he is the great giver of all we enjoy. Our neighbours and all that they bestow of care or of kindness are given us by God, and God Himself hath been pleased to sum up all our duties in what we owe to Him and to our neighbour; these two branches include the whole sum of man's duty. To God we owe the chief part, as "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." He is the Father of us all; the Father of all mankind. God hath, however, placed us under obligations of duty to others who are our neighbours, because from them we receive great and important blessings. God has not only given to man to enjoy Himself, the great author and fountain of all excellence, but by the bounties of His wisdom and power hath raised up around us all the several advantages arising from our inter-

course with the brotherhood of our fellow-creatures; no one of us lives unto himself, his life is not his own, he has it from God; neither are the many enjoyments which sweeten and ennoble life his own, he gets them from the bounties of the neighbours among whom he lives. Man's life would be a weary load were there none to enjoy it with him—to reciprocate his affections, or to kindle up all those sweet and happy influences which flow from intercourse with others. Therefore our neglect of our duty is just open rebellion to our God; and, on the other hand, our compliance with duty is the discharge of our allegiance to God. No one who wishes to obey and honour God ought to be ignorant of the claims and comprehensiveness of his duty to his neighbour; its performance is the chief part of practical religion, it is the grand and crowning ornament of that character which is founded on faith in God.

But, before we proceed further, I think it will not be out of place to enquire what is meant by the term our neighbour. We find that our neighbour, in Scripture, means all men; "For God created man in his own image, male and female created he them" (Gen. i. 27). And although the spiritual supernatural image

wherein man did resemble God in holiness was banished from the nature of man universally, till he was pleased to renew it and make us His own workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works; yet man still bears the natural image of God, inasmuch as he partakes of a spiritual, intellectual nature, resembling that of God. There is in every man a spiritual nature of which God owns Himself to be the great parent and common Father. Therefore, to have a heart universally inspired with love to men as men, which flows even as far as the nature of man reaches and extends itself, even to all mankind; this, I say, we must understand to be the sum of the duty given us in charge under the expression of love to our neighbour. We are to be lovers of mankind under one common notion; that is, to love upon a universal reason, which reaches to man as man, and so consequently to every man; for we all bear the image of the common Lord upon us, and it is the thing we find superadded as the enforcement of one of the great precepts of the second table, namely, "Thou shalt not kill" (Exod. xx. 13); and a reason why the breach and violation of it should be punished, that "in the image of God created he man" (Gen. ix. 6). Certainly the reason is the

same as to all the laws of that table; therefore men as men, under that common notion, and for that very reason, are the objects of that required duty. As when we are forbidden to kill, every man is the object of that prohibition; so, when we are commandednot to steal, or bear false witness, are we not equally barred up from doing that injury to all mankind? When we are inhibited the coveting another man's property, is it not every man's property which we are thereby forbidden to covet? Instead of warranting us to confine our benevolent regards to what we may consider neighbours — our kindred or countrymen, our benefactors or friends, men of our own sect, or even religion—our Lawgiver commands us to embrace, in the wide-spread arms of our benevolence, all mankind — strangers, foreigners, heathens, even enemies. But this brings us to consider the

IMPORTANCE OF THIS DUTY.

Not for ourselves but others, is the grand law of nature inscribed by the hand of God on every part of creation. Not for itself but others does the sun dispense its beams; not for themselves but others, do the clouds distil their showers; not for herself but others, does the *earth unlock* her treasures; not for themselves

but others, do the trees produce their fruits, or the flowers diffuse their fragrance and display their various hues. So, not for Himself but others, are the blessings of heaven bestowed on man; and whenever, instead of diffusing them around, he devotes them exclusively to his own gratification, and shuts himself up in the dark and flinty caverns of selfishness, he transgresses the great law of creation, and cuts himself off from the created universe and its Author; he sacrilegiously converts to his own use the favours which were given him for the benefit of others, and must be considered, not only as an unprofitable, but as a fraudulent servant, who has worse than wasted his Lord's money. He who lives only to himself, and consumes the bounty of heaven upon his lusts, or consecrates it to the demon of avarice, is a barren rock in a fertile plain; he is a thorny bramble in a fruitful vineyard; he is the grave of God's blessings.

I fear this is but too true a portrait of many, for how many of us live as if our fellow-creature had no claim upon us; as if our duty to him were of no importance, a mere trifle, only to be thought of after our own selfish ends have been gratified. But this is a most dangerous delusion, and if persevered in will ruin us for ever. For this loving of our neighbour is of

the utmost importance; it is highly important to our welfare here, it is essential to our happiness hereafter. It is important to all, it is a command of God, for it is written,—"Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Lev. xix. 17, 18). Our Saviour attaches the utmost importance to it, He has given it as the badge and livery of His disciples; "By this (says He) shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another" (John xiii. 5). It is of more importance to us than empires, "For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul" (Mark viii. 36); for the neglect of it is the road to hell; on its omission is grounded that dreadful sentence, "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. xxv. 41). And this brings us to look for a little at the

NATURE OF THIS DUTY.

The nature of this duty is love—for "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10); and the apostle James calls this duty a royal law,—"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scriptures, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well" (chap. ii. 8). Our Saviour, you know, gathers our whole duty into love,—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy

heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself; upon these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matt. xxii. 37-40). We learn from this that love to our neighbour is likewise love to God, for John, in speaking of love to God, says, "Whoso keepeth His word, in him, verily, is the love of God perfected" (John ii. 5); that is, the very perfection of the love of God stands in this, in keeping His word; then this duty is His word. And again, "This (saith he) is the love of God, that we keep his commandments" (chap v. 3.); this duty is His commandment. And, speaking of love to our neighbour, he says, "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him" (chap. iii. 17)? The apostle calls this the love of God also; it being one and the same living principle of love implanted by God Himself, which spreads itself to several objects, all under one and the same communication; and it is preposterous for any man to say that he is a Christian, or that he loves God, when he shows the contrary in his words and actions towards his neighbour; for the apostle says, "If a man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love

God whom he hath not seen" (1. John iv. 20). I might quote many other passages to the same effect, but I think what has been advanced will suffice to prove that the nature of this duty is love. Therefore we must consider love as the primary and principal thing, as seated and enthroned in the heart and soul; and as the original principle which comprehends justice, honesty, and all other minor duties contained in the second table of the Decalogue.

And if we have this love in our hearts it will guard us against those great and dangerous vices which are so injurious to our neighbour's welfare. It will keep us from all envy, for "love envieth not" (1. Cor. xiii. 4); how vainly then do those pretend to this virtue, who grudge and repine at the prosperity of others. It will keep down all pride and haughtiness, for "love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up" (1. Cor. xiii. 4), but putteth "on the bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering" (Col. iii. 12). It will cast out all uncharitable and rash judging; love, as the apostle saith, "thinketh no evil" (1. Cor. xiii. 5), but on the contrary, "believeth all things, hopeth all things" (verse 7). It will do away with all dissembling and feigned kindness, for such love is "without dissimulation" (Rom. xii. 9). It will

cast out all self-seeking, it will despise all projectings for gain or advantage, for "love seeketh not her own" (1. Cor. xiii. 5). It will keep out all malice and desire of revenge, for these are so utterly contrary to love that it is impossible they can dwell in the same breast. It is the property of love to "bear all things" (1. Cor. xiii. 7), to endure the greatest injuries without thought of making any other return for them than prayers and blessings; and, therefore, the malicious, revengeful person is, of all others, the greatest stranger to this love.

In various ways this love is shown. It is manifested in us when it leads to the avoiding of everything injurious to our neighbour, and to sedulous attention to every thing adapted to promote his welfare. Abstaining from evil is but one half of our duty. It is not enough to avoid imprecating evil upon our neighbour, we must sincerely desire and pray for his welfare. This love also showeth itself in almsgiving and hospitality, for we must remember that we are the stewards of God, and that, "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, hath not the love of God dwelling in him" (1 John iii. 17). We show this love also by the forgiveness of injuries,

and a constant endeavour to return good for evil; for it is written, "Bless them which persecute you, bless and curse not" (Rom. xii. 14); "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (ver. 21). One of the most beautiful exhibitions of the character of our Saviour was afforded by His conduct under persecution; "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter" (Isa. liii. 7): "when He was reviled He reviled not again: when He suffered He threatened not" (1 Peter ii. 23). This is an example which we must all try to imitate. It is much easier to abstain from returning evil for evil, than really to love and pray for the good of our enemies: this, however, is Christian duty; such is the spirit of the Gospel, just so far therefore, as we find our hearts indisposed, to bless those who curse us, or inclined to indulge even a secret satisfaction when evil comes upon them, we come short of this love. This love is also manifest in sympathy, "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Rom. xii. 15). The Gospel requires that we should feel and act under the impression that all men are brethren; that we have a common nature, a common Father, and a common destiny. How lovely is genuine sympathy. How much like Christ is the man who feels the sorrows

and joys of others as though they were his own. This brings us to the

RULE OR MEASURE OF THIS DUTY.

The rule according to which we are to exercise this duty is that royal law, as the apostle James calls it, "to love our neighbour as ourselves" (James ii. 8). Or, as our Saviour elsewhere expresses it: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye so to them" (Matt. vii 12). All our conduct ought to be regulated by this rule. We ought to treat others with the same respect, courtesy, and kindness, that we would wish to receive from them. This rule is of great importance to us, it shows both what we should do, and what we should not do. It binds both negatively and positively, and is of the greatest use in all the relations of life. Were husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, often to apply this rule, how full of peace and happiness would be the domestic scene. Husbands would love their wives, and wives love their husbands; parents would not provoke their children to wrath, and children would not be disrespectful and disobedient; masters would give to their servants the things that are just and equal, and servants would identify their

masters' interests with their own; governors would never be tyrannical, and subjects never turbulent. Then, taking this royal law of love or love to ourselves as the standard whereby to measure all our actions to or dealings with our neighbour, I will here go a little into detail, and show by a few examples how this royal law is violated and how fulfilled, and in order to do so I will take the four distinct capacities of our neighbour, namely, his soul, body, possessions, and credit. Then,—

(1.) Let us consider how this law is violated or fulfilled with regard to our neighbour's soul. We violate this law of love when we do any wrong or injury to it. The soul, you know, signifies that immortal part of us which must live eternally, either in bliss or woe, in another world. And the soul thus understood is capable of no higher sort of injury than to bring the great evil of sin upon it. Sin is the disease and wound of the soul, as being directly contrary to grace, which is the health and soundness of it. Now this wound we give to every soul we by any means whatsoever draw into sin. The ways of doing that are various; I shall only mention a few of the more direct ones, such as the tempting or commanding of sin, that is, when a person who

has power over another shall require him to do something that is unlawful; an example of this we have in Nebuchadnezzar commanding the worship of the golden image (Dan. iii. 5), and any parent or master who shall require of his child or servant to do any unlawful act is similarly criminal. And there is counselling of sin, when we advise or persuade to any wickedness: thus, Job's wife counselled her husband to curse God (Job ii. 9); and Ahithophel advised Absalom to go in unto his father's concubines (2 Sam. xvi. 20); and there is enticing and alluring to sin, by setting before men the pleasures or profits they shall reap by it: of this sort of enticement Solomon gives warning (Prov. i. 10, 11, 13). And there is assistance in sin; that is, when we aid or help others either in contriving or acting a sin; thus, Jonadab helped Amnon in plotting the ravishing of his sister (2 Sam. xiii). All these are direct means of bringing this great evil of sin upon our neighbour, and are violations of this royal law.

We fulfil this royal law to our neighbour's soul when we do what we can for the salvation of it, "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10). And here let us not deceive ourselves, for we may pretend great love within, but if none appear in actions, we may say of that

love as James doth of the faith he speaks of, that, it "is dead" (Jam. ii. 20);—it is the loving "in deed" (1. John iii. 18), that must approve our hearts before God. Therefore it is mainly love in actions that I speak of here. And you know the salvation of the soul is of great concernment, the securing of that is a matter of much greater moment than the gaining of empires; for souls are those precious things which nothing could ransom but the blood of the only begotten Son of God. Then how zealous should we be to make our neighbour's soul what we wish our own to be; and for this purpose we should neglect no opportunity. In all our conversings with others, the one great design should be ever present, of doing some good to their souls. If this purpose were fixed in our minds, we should then discern perhaps many opportunities which we now overlook of doing something towards it; the ignorance of one calls on us to endeavour his instruction, the open sin of another, to reprove and admonish him, the faint and weak faith of another, to confirm and encourage him; every spiritual want of our neighbour may give us some occasion of exercising some part of this love. And if all our entreatings of men to have mercy on their own souls will not work on them, we must continue

to exhort by our examples, we must, by our great care and tenderness for our own souls, preach to them the value of theirs; and give not over our compassions to them, but with the prophet, let our "soul weep in secret for them" (Jer. xiii. 17), and with the Psalmist, let "rivers of waters run down our eyes, because they keep not God's law" (Psal. cxix. 136); yea, with Christ Himself, weep over them who will not "know the things which belong unto their peace" (Luke xix. 42); and when no importunities with them will work, yet not even then must we cease to importune God for them, that He will draw them to Himself. Thus we see Samuel, when he could not dissuade the people from that sinful purpose they were upon, did not cease praying for them, but looked on it as a duty which it would be a sin for him to omit. "God forbid (says he) that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you" 1. Sam. xii. 23). Nor shall we need to fear that our prayers will be quite lost, for if they prevail not for those for whom we pour them out, they will return into our own bosoms, and we shall be sure not to miss the reward of our love. But

(2.) I will now show how this law is violated and fulfilled with regard to our neighbour's body,

and that we know is capable of being hurt in several ways, and in different degrees. And, as our space will not allow us to treat it in every degree, I will take the highest, which is taking the life. This is forbidden in the very letter of the sixth commandment: "Thou shalt do no murder." Murder may be committed either by open violence, when we, either by sword or any other instrument, take away another's life immediately and directly, or it may be done secretly and treacherously, as David murdered Uriah, not with his own sword, but with the sword of the children of Amnon (2 Samuel xi. 17), and Jezebel, Naboth by a false accusation (1 Kings xxi. 13). Divers have committed this sin of murder by poison, false witness, or some such concealed ways. The former is commonly the effect of a sudden rage, the latter hath several originals; sometimes it proceeds from some old malice fixed in the heart towards the person, sometimes from some covetous or ambitious desires: such a one stands in our way to our profit or preferment, and therefore he must be removed. But beside these more direct ways of killing, there is another, and that is when by our persuasions and enticements we draw a man to do that which tends to the shortening of his life,

and it is apparent to do so. He that makes his neighbour drunk, if by that drunkenness he comes to any mortal hurt which he would have escaped had he been sober, is not clear of his death; or if he die not by any such sudden accident, yet if drinking engendered the disease, and that disease kill him, I know not how he who drew him to that excess can acquit himself of his murder in the sight of God, though human laws touch him not. I wish those who make it their business to draw in customers to that trade of debauchery would consider this. There is yet another way of taking the life of our neighbour, which we not unfrequently see men indulge in (although it does not always lead to that), and that is by inciting and stirring up others to it, or to that degree of anger and revenge which produces it; as he that sets two persons at variance, or, seeing them already so, blows the coals; if murder ensue, he certainly has his share in the guilt, which is a consideration that ought to affright all from having anything to do in the kindling or increasing of contention. And we fulfil this law towards our neighbour's body when we do him all the good we can, and in doing so we are not only to compassionate his pains and miseries, but

also to do what we can for his ease and relief. The good Samaritan (Luke x.), would never have been held up as our pattern, had he not helped as well as pitied the wounded man. It is not good wishes, nor good words, which avail in such cases (James ii. 15, 16): "If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be you warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" This relieving of the bodily wants of our neighbour is a thing so strictly required of us, that we find it set down (Matt. xxv.) as the especial thing we shall be tried by at the last day, on the omission whereof is grounded that dreadful sentence (verse 41), "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." And we find all those acts of love that we are to perform (at least, the more frequent and ordinary ones), enumerated in this chapter, such as giving meat to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty, harbouring the stranger, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick and imprisoned; by which visiting is meant not a bare coming to see them, but so coming as to comfort and relieve them, for otherwise it will be like the

Levite in the Gospel (Luke x.), who came and looked on the wounded man, but did no more, which will never be accepted by God. These are common and ordinary exercises of this love, for which we cannot want frequent opportunities. But besides these, we may find many others. It is no uncommon thing now-a-days, to see men, who by a course of intemperance are in danger of destroying their health, and shortening their days, and then it is our duty, not only to the soul, but to the body also, to endeavour to draw them from it. It is impossible to set down all the possible acts of this love, because there may sometimes happen such opportunities as none can foresee; we are, therefore, always to carry about us a serious resolution of doing whatever good of this kind we shall at any time discern occasion for, and whenever that occasion is offered, we are to look on it as a call from heaven, to put that resolution in practice. And this brings us—

(3.) To show how this law is violated and fulfilled with regard to our neighbour's possessions; and by possessions, I mean simply such things as house, land, cattle, money, and the like, in which he hath a right and property; these we are by this rule to suffer him to enjoy, without seeking either to work him

damage, or to promote our private benefit. If we are malicious we shall desire to work our neighbour mischief, though we profit nothing by it ourselves; while if we are covetous we shall have an eye to what we get by it. I shall not dispute which of these two vices is the worst; they are both great and crying sins, and that is ground enough for abhorring each. Now as there are several ways of violating this law towards our neighbour's possessions, I shall for method's sake, distinguish them into these three,—oppression, theft, and deceit.

By oppression, I mean the open and barefaced robbery of seizing upon the possessions of others, and owning and avowing the doing so. For the doing of this there are several instruments, as first, that of power, by which many nations and princes have been turned out of their rights, and many private men out of their estates. Sometimes, again, law is made the instrument of it; he that covets his neighbour's possessions pretends a claim to them, and by corrupting justice, or over-ruling it by greatness and authority, obtains judgment on his side; this is a high oppression, and of the worst sort, thus to make the law, which was intended for the protection and defence of men's rights,

to be the means of overthrowing them. Sometimes, again, the very necessities of the oppressed are the means of his oppression; thus it is in the case of extortion and griping usury; a man is in extreme want of money, and this gives opportunities to the extortioner to wrest unconscionably from him, to which the poor man is forced to yield to supply his present wants. All these and many the like are but several ways of acting this one sin of oppression, which becomes the more heinous by how much the more helpless the person is who is thus oppressed; therefore the oppression of the widow and fatherless is in Scripture mentioned as the height of this sin.

We now come to the violation of this law by theft, and of that there are two kinds. The one is the withholding what we should pay, and the other is taking from our neighbour what is already in his possession. Of the first sort, is the non-payment of debts incurred by borrowing, or by purchasing with credit, which is akin to theft, as it is keeping from my neighbour that which is his. This is a great and very common injustice; men can now-a-days with equal confidence deny him who claims a debt as him who asks an alms. Nay; many times it is a matter of quarrel for a man

to demand his own. This is so great an injustice, that I see not how a man can look upon anything he possesses as his own, whilst he thus denies another his rights. It is the duty of every man in debt, rather to strip himself of all; casting himself naked upon God's Providence, than thus to feather his nest with the spoils of his neighbours. The second part of theft is the taking from our neighbour that which is already in his possession; and this may be done either more violently and openly, or else more closely and slily. The first is the manner of those who rob on the highway or plunder houses, where by force they take the goods of their neighbour; the other is the way of the pilfering thief who takes away a man's goods unknown to him. I shall not dispute which of these is the worst: it is enough that they are both such a violation of this law as to make men odious to God, and unfit for human society; and to betray the actors to the greatest mischiefs even in this world, the forfeiture of liberty for life being by law appointed the reward of it; and there are few who follow this trade long but at last meet with punishment. I am sure the thief makes a pitiful bargain; he steals his neighbour's goods, and in exchange he must forfeit his life or his soul, perhaps both; and if

the whole world be too mean a price for a soul, as our Saviour tells us (Mark viii. 36), who knew best the value of souls, having Himself bought them, what a strange madness is it to barter them away for every petty trifle, as many do who have got such a habit of stealing, that not the most worthless thing can escape their fingers. Under this head of theft may be ranked the receivers of stolen goods, whether those who take them as partners in the theft, or those who buy them when they know or believe them to be stolen. And here also comes in the concealing of any goods a man finds of his neighbour's, which whosoever restores not, if he know or can discover the owner, is no better than a thief, for he withholds from his neighbour that which properly belongs to him. We come now to the violation of this law by deceit, and in it there may be as many acts as there are occasions of intercourse and dealing between man and man. It is impossible to name them all, therefore I shall only take a few of the more common ones which we see practised (but too frequently) in matters of traffic, or bargaining between man and man, wherein there may be deceit both in the seller and buyer. That of the seller is commonly either in concealing the faults of the commodity

or in over-rating it. The ways of concealing its faults are ordinarily these; first by denying that it hath any such fault, or perhaps commending it for a directly contrary quality. A second means of concealment is by using some art to make the commodity look fair, and to hide its faults. A third means is the selection of ignorant buyers; this is an art too well known among tradesmen, who will not bring out their faulty wares to men of skill, but keep them to put off upon those whose unskilfulness may make them passable with them. Under this head of concealment may be referred the deceit of false weights and measures, for that is concealing from the buyer a defect in the quantity, as the other is in the quality of the commodity; and is making him pay for what he hath not. This sort of fraud is pointed at particularly by Solomon (Prov. xi. 1), with this note upon it, that it is an abomination to the Lord.

The second part of fraud in the seller, is in his over-rating the commodity, by taking advantage of the buyer's ignorance in the value of the thing, or by taking advantage of his necessity;—we find a man having present and urgent need of such a thing, and therefore take the opportunity to impose upon him.

On the buyer's part there are not so many opportunities of fraud, yet it is possible a man may sometimes happen to sell something the worth whereof he is not acquainted with, and then it is as unjust for the buyer to make gain by his ignorance, as in the other case it was for the seller. But that which oftener falls out is the case of necessity, which may as probably fall on the seller's side as on the buyer's; a man's wants compel him to sell, and permit him not to stay to make the best bargain, but force him to take the first offer: and here for the buyer to grate upon him because he sees him in that strait, is the fault which I before showed it to be in the seller.

And to the fulfilling of this law towards our neighbour's possessions, we are to promote his thriving and prosperity in these outward good things, and to that end be willing to assist and further him in all honest ways of improving or preserving them, by any neighbourly or friendly office. Opportunities to do this many times occur; a man may sometimes by his power, or by persuasion, deliver his neighbour's goods out of the hands of a thief or oppressor; sometimes, again, by his advice and counsel he may set him in a way of thriving, or turn him

from some ruinous course; and many other occasions there may be of doing good to others, without any loss or damage to ourselves. And this we are to do even to our rich neighbours, although this love do not bind us to give to those who want less than ourselves, yet whenever we can further their profit without lessening our store, it is required of us.

But towards our poor brother this love ties us much more; for if he has no goods of his own, we are not to stick at parting with our own to relieve him, and as far as we are able to give freely what is necessary to him. And here let us remember that it is the motive that qualifies the action in the sight of God; that it is love seated and enthroned in the heart that is to be the fountain, the impulsive and efficient cause, of all our giving; we are not to give out of vain-glory, to procure ourselves a name; we are not to sound a trumpet before us, and proclaim that we give alms, as our Saviour speaks of the Pharisees. But we must give because he is our poor brother, who is a man, and bears the image of God, and it is vain for us to pretend that we love either God or man, when we love our money so much better, that we will see our poor brother suffer all extremities rather than

part with any thing to relieve him. But we now proceed—

(4.) To show how this law is violated and fulfilled with regard to our neighbour's credit or good name, and that we know is a thing a man holds most precious, oftentimes dearer than his life; which is apparent by the hazards men sometimes run to preserve even a mistaken reputation: but it is highly esteemed by all sober men, especially those who subsist by dealings in the world, for it may be reckoned as the chief means of their livelihood. And this we may lessen or impair in many ways, but particularly by spreading false reports. Of those reports there are two sorts: the one is when we say something of our neighbour which we directly know to be false; the other, when possibly we may have some slight surmise or foundation for the thing, but upon such weak grounds, that it is as likely to be false as true. The manner of spreading false reports of both kinds is not always the same; sometimes it is open and avowed, as it is by bearing false-witness before the courts of justice: and sometimes by a public and common declaring of them in all companies, and before such as are likely to carry it farther; and sometimes it is more close and private, as when we go about from one to

another and privately vent our slanders; this trick of delivering them in secret, being the way to make them both more believed and more spoken of too; for he who receives such a tale as a secret from one person thinks to please somebody else, by telling it as a secret to him also.

And towards our neighbour's credit or good name we may have many occasions of fulfilling this law; sometimes towards the innocent, and sometimes even towards the guilty. If one whom we know to be an innocent person, be slandered and traduced, this love binds us to do what we can towards declaring his innocence, and delivering him from that false imputation, and that not only by witnessing when we are called upon, but by a voluntary offering of our testimony on his behalf; or, if the accusation be not before a court of justice, and so there be no place for our solemn testimony, but that it be only a slander tossed from one to another, yet even there we are to do what we can to clear him, by taking all occasions publicly to declare what we know of his innocence. But even to the guilty this love is to be performed; sometimes by concealing the fault, if it be such that no other part of duty to others makes it necessary to discover it, or it be not so notorious as

that it will be sure to betray itself. The wounds of reputation are of all others the most incurable, and, therefore, it may well become this love to prevent them even where they have been deserved; and such a tenderness in hiding the fault may sooner bring the offender to repentance, if it be seconded, as it ought to be, with all earnestness of private admonition; but if the fault be such that it cannot be concealed, yet still there may be place for this love, in lessening it as far as the circumstances will admit; as if it were done suddenly and rashly, this love will allow some abatement of censure which would belong to a designed and a deliberate act; and so proportionably in other circumstances. But the most frequent exercises of this love happen toward those of whose either innocence or guilt we have no knowledge, who are by some doubtful action brought under suspicion. And here we must remember that it is the property of love not to think evil, to judge the best; and, therefore, we are both to abstain from uncharitable conclusions of them ourselves, and, as much as in us lies, to keep others from them also; and so preserve the credit of our neighbour, which is oftentimes as much shaken by unjust suspicions, as it would be by the truest accusation. To these cases I suppose

belongs that precept of Christ, "Judge not," and when we consider how that is backed in the following words, "that ye be not judged" (Matt. vii. 1), we shall have cause to believe it no such light matter as the world seems to account it. Our unmerciful judging of others will be paid home to us in the strict and severe judgment of God.

Thus I have endeavoured to show, by a few of the many instances which exist, how we violate this law, and how we fulfil it. And this brings us to consider our

OBLIGATIONS TO THIS DUTY.

Our obligations to, or reason why we ought to exercise this law of love are many, but, for the sake of brevity, I shall only mention a few, such as, 1.—Our neighbour's claims, he is our brother; 2.—God's command; 3.—The penalty; and, 4.—The advantages flowing from the performance of it.

1.—Our neighbour's claims—he is our brother. All men are brethren, for God has made of one blood all men that dwell on the face of the earth. We are all descendants from Adam and Eve, the common parents of the human race. We are all partakers of the same nature, and heirs of the same eternal hopes, for "Christ gave Himself a ransom for all" (1. Tim. ii. 6). There is in this

fact a sufficient reason for us to love our neighbour as ourself; and again, "No man," saith the Scripture, "hateth his own flesh" (Ephes. v. 29). Can any man rationally, can any man consistently with natural feeling, hate his own flesh? If not, then we are all members one of another; brethren by nature, brethren in Christ. Whoever hateth another, hateth his own flesh; whoever displays hatred under any shape towards a fellow-creature, displays it towards a brother for whom Christ died; he scorns a brother of his own, he scorns a brother of the Lord Jesus. We see, by the very fact that Christ died for us, that we are under obligations to exercise this love to all men; we cannot ourselves directly do good to all, yet we can by our mite and prayers assist those who "Because Christ laid down his life for them," are ready "to lay down theirs for their brethren" (1. John iii. 16). I mean those devoted servants of Christ, who value not their own lives, who leave their native land to go to distant regions, among the savage heathen, for no other purpose than to carry the glad tidings of salvation to their benighted souls.

2.—God's command. That our duty to our neighbour is the command of God, nobody who believes in Scripture will deny; for He states

it most plainly when He says, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," (Lev. xix. 17, 18). By this we are under the strongest obligation to this love; for God hath made us, and not we ourselves. He is the Father of all mercies, from whom we derive the temporal comforts which we enjoy, and to whom we owe the blessed and glorious hope of everlasting life. He sustains our lives; He is our protector in all danger, our support in trouble, our guide in difficulty, our best consolation in time of sickness, our only refuge in the hour of death. Then can any man who pretends to the least spark of love to God, withhold from his neighbour that which God requires of him? Surely not. As an instance, let us suppose that a man had broken the laws of his country, and by doing so had brought upon himself the penalty of death, and while in this sad condition unable to help himself, his sovereign took pity on him, and not only delivered him from his lamentable condition, but likewise loaded him with the greatest honours that the nation could afford in such a case; how great would be that man's obligation to obey even the slightest wish of his great benefactor? If so, how much more are we under

the obligation to obey God, who hath not only delivered us from spiritual death (John iii. 16), and raised us to the royal honours of being kings and priests (Rev. i. 6), but hath also made us his sons, for, "Behold," saith the apostle, "what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God?" (1 John iii. 1).

3.—The penalty. In not performing this duty to our neighbour, we not only rob him of his due, but we also sin against God, and by so doing bring upon ourselves the penalty of death, "for the wages of sin is death," (Rom. vi. 23). How awful a thing then is the neglect of this duty; against it Christ on the judgment day will pronounce that dreadful sentence, "Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall we answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or a thirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch

as ye did it not to one of the least of these (my brethren), ye did it not to me." (Matt. xxv. 41—45).

4.—Advantages flowing from the performance of this duty. 1. To ourselves. 2. To our neighbour. 3. To society.

(1.) To ourselves. In performing this duty to our neighbour, we receive great advantages. We have the pleasure which the doing of good to any one brings to us, for it is a pleasant thing to do good, there is sweetness and delight in it. What can give us more pleasure than to know that by our advice and example we have been the means of turning a fellow creature from any evil practice, whereby he was in danger of losing both body and soul! Or have we ourselves ever felt hunger, or any of the privations of this life; have we ever been subject to the necessity of imploring assistance from our fellow-creature to soften any of these privations? If so, then surely we shall find joy in doing what we can for others in similar circumstances. We ought ever to remember that "It is more blessed to give than to receive," (Acts xx. 35). And the more kind and beneficent we are to those around us, the more benefit we receive thereby; we make the public our guardians, for it is looked on by every

one as an act of great criminality to harm or do any mischief to a good man. But we have greater privileges than these, for what can be more precious than to have God for our friend, and the Son of God for our brother, and to receive that glorious invitation on that day when the son of man shall come in his glory: "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. xxv. 34).

(2.) To our neighbour. By the performance of this duty our neighbour hath many advantages; for if he be ignorant of the things which belong to his peace, by it there is instruction for him. If he fall into sin, by it there is admonition for him. Or if he be weak in faith, by it he is confirmed and encouraged. And so likewise with all his spiritual necessities. Or if he be hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, sick, or imprisoned, by it he will be administered to in all these cases. Or again, if he be in any perplexity or difficulty about the improving or preserving any of his goods or possessions, and want any assistance, friendly advice, or council, by it he will receive it. Or if his good name be slandered or traduced, so that he is in danger of losing his reputation, whereby (it may be the only thing) he hath to gain his living,

then by it he will be delivered from all false accusations and imputations, so that it is a blessed thing for our neighbour where this duty is performed as it ought to be.

(3.) To Society.—By every one performing this duty to his neighbour, society in general would appear quite a different thing from what it is at present. For, instead of hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, envyings, murder, drunkenness, revellings, all manner of theft, and deception, and such like, we would see charity, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, righteousness, faith, meekness, temperance, and such like graces which are now lost amongst an overwhelming majority of vices. We have a beautiful and figurative description of what society would be were this duty performed, in the prophecy of Isaiah where he says, "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy moun-

tain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. xi. 6. 9).

CONCLUSION.

Having seen that our duty to man consists in love, and that this love is to extend itself to all that partake of the same nature with ourselves; it becomes us to examine ourselves to see whether we possess this love or not. How few of us have a real and fervent affection for such as partake of this nature. How little is our resentment of the common calamities of the world, whether in reference to their eternal or temporal concernments. How few regret, or take it deeply to heart, that men are so generally without God in the world, and without Christ; that the knowledge is so imperfect among men of their own original, and of the end of their being; of Him who made them, and what they were made for! That the knowledge of a Redeemer is yet so little among men. Who regrets or lays it to heart, that the world is so filled with violence, barbarism, and blood, that a deluge and inundation of misery is with sin spread over the world, and transmitted and propagated from age to age, and from generation to generation? When we hear of wars and devastations, and garments rolled in blood

here and there, how few are they who concern themselves for it, as long as they are quiet and at peace in their own habitations! Or how cold and faint are our supplications on the behalf of men so generally considered, though we are expressly directed by that exhortation of the Apostle to make prayer and supplication for all men (1. Tim. ii. 1). How little comprehensive are our spirits to take in the common concerns of the world with seriousness as the case requires. How little do we imitate the blessed God in this; for a general philanthropy, or kindness to men, is even a most god-like quality, and that whence he hath represented Himself as a pattern to us. God says now that He loveth mercy more than sacrifice, and regards the performance of our duty to our neighbour as the great proof of godliness here, and the signs of our acceptance hereafter, for it is written "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry,

and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day. And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Isa. lviii. 67. 10. 11.)

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ESSAY III.

THE subject which ought at all times to claim man's special attention in his preparation for another world, and, through his Saviour's atonement, to secure his inheritance thereto, is, next to his duty to God, man's duty towards his neighbour. On the due observance of the one depends, in a great measure, the right fulfilment of the other. A man who conscientiously performs his duty to God, generally manifests this diligence in the exercise of it also towards his fellow-creatures; on the contrary, he who fails in the proper discharge of this, his first responsibility, often shrinks back in the performance of his second. The application of our lives to the glory of God, and the good of our neighbour, is the evidence and illustration of a noble and Christian spirit which actuates us; the manifestation of a broken and a contrite heart; but, specially, it is the vital proof of never-fading gratitude to that Omnipotent *Being*, whose boundless love to our vile human

nature far surpasses our weak and finite conception; a love which claims the best return of which our depraved understanding is susceptible, to Him in whose image man was, ere his fall, created.

To our heavenly Father, in whom "we live, and move, and have our being," and from whose bountiful hand issue daily fresh supplies, we owe our primal and devoted allegiance: a duty which ought in no respect to prevent that incumbent on us towards those whose lot it is to share with us the bitters and sweets of life.

The ten commandments delivered by God to Moses from Mount Sinai, were the constitution of the moral law; as well for the better regulation and adaptation of men's lives to their duty to the Creator and the creature, as for the better distinction between those who transgress, and those who obey the will of God; whom He in return, for His Son's sake, will either reward or punish, as their merits will allow. The first four of these commandments have especial reference to man's duty to Him who gave them; while the remaining six are employed, in setting forth his duty towards his neighbour.

The first of these six, as the objects who

demand man's love, next to his Creator, very properly binds on him, the obligations of respect and obedience to his parents, which he lies under. "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." This command, as a chosen vessel, has a particular mark of Divine favour stamped on those who faithfully discharge it; "it is the first commandment with promise!" To them "to whom under Providence, we owe our earthly existence;" to them who have for us, conjointly, "borne the burden and heat of the day;" to them who have watched, and, with the most tender solicitude, guided our tottering steps over the slippery paths of infancy; to them who have, through the heedless years of youth, directed, and warned us from being caught by its flesh-hooks; and, to them whose love to our more advanced stage of maturity, is still paramount; we owe a deep and binding obligation. Has not all this, the evidence of the refulgence of their love towards us, their offspring, a claim on our most filial, most decorous conduct towards them? To Him who works all things together for the good of His creatures; and who has, through the voluntary sacrifice of His own dear Son, *opened* a way by which He will exempt us from

the service of Satan, if we will but walk in it; to Him who has, through the same mediation, been pleased to adopt us as children, we can look up, and, in the language of Scripture, say, "Abba, Father."

"Thou shalt do no murder," is the next exposition of God's will to man. Besides the external act of shedding man's blood, there are other means whereby this command may be transgressed; there may be a breach made in this Divine law, by rendering the lives of our fellow-creatures burdensome to them by oppression, or by an excessive exercise of envy, anger, or any of the like passions this body of clay is heir to. This decree can be broken, when noticing our neighbour perishing from hunger, cold, or thirst, if we do not bestow on him such timely aid as may be in our power to afford. But, specially, this commandment may be violated, when seeing a brother run in that "broad way which leadeth to destruction," in not warning him of his perilous position; and plucking him, as it were, as a "brand from the burning." When we behold our fellow-mortal thus situated, our highest aim should be to direct his attention towards that fatal consummation to which he is naturally hastening, and to dissuade him from that which is evil, to

the persuasion and practice of that which is good. Our words ought never to respond to, nor our feelings be contemporary with, those of Cain, when he exclaimed, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Next in order follows, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." This command, the infringement of which has, in all ages, been the most detestable in the sight of Him whose law it is, has also been the main origin of all those heavy judgments, and sharp arrows wherewith God has, from time to time, considered it best to chastise His people. Was not this the predominant sin of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, in which former large city were not found ten righteous, and both of which were destroyed by fire from heaven? Was not the pursuit of this most vicious of every vice, at one time, the chief characteristic of the whole world, except eight persons? Did not such reproachable conduct irritate most justly God's wrath and indignation against those who indulged in it, in sweeping them all away by a flood, except those who would use the required means for their safety, which a merciful Father had provided; although they had thwarted His will? And has not this sensuality in our own age—of this enlightened age of Christendom—

been, though perhaps invisibly, punished of late years by pestilence, wars, or commotions? Have not we, but justly, received the due reward that attends an incontinent life? And can we for a moment complain at the retributive justice of that Almighty Being whom we have offended, in thus afflicting us? How prevalent is this common failure in this highly favoured country! Although, as it is a subject of the most delicate touch, it does too seldom retain its delicacy in practice; for, while there be many myriads in whom the beauty of virtue is strikingly contrasted to the deformity of vice; yet still there are, besides, many thousands who yield themselves servants to the allurements of this plague-spot of their nature. For the gratification of their carnal appetites, they imbibe that "mess of pottage," which, to a purer mind, is so very hard of digestion, and thereby sell their precious souls — that soul that can never die—which, if not bought back by the full and perfect merits of Christ's redemption, will have its portion "in the lake that burns with brimstone and with fire." Let each and all strive (by the grace of God's Holy Spirit) to guard against this besetting sin; until this spiritual destroying angel, this troubler of the flesh, and this national evil be expelled from

our land; for until this conduct be practised by us, there never can be balm in Gilead, or a Physician to heal us, in Him who "came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." Then, but not till then, will these merciful words be applicable to the restoration of our soul's health, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as snow, though they be red like crimson, yet they shall be as wool."

The next which claims our attention is, "Thou shalt not steal." A faithful obedience to this law is a duty which every man owes to his neighbour; for, saith the inspired writer, "Provide things honest in the sight of all men;" on the other hand, a deviation from its path is at once to pay the grossest injustice to Him who ordained it. From the great Giver of all good we have from our birth received, and are constantly receiving, additional causes for thankfulness; by Him, without whose notice "a sparrow cannot fall to the ground," all His creatures are made recipients of His innumerable benefits, without respect to rank or person. Can we then so turn our backs on our heavenly Father's bounty, as to steal a portion of the husks that the swine do eat, in robbing another of his participation therein? And yet how

many there are, wohse sins in this respct rise in magnitude from a mole-hill to a mountain—from the commission of some petty theft, to the confirmed habit of an evil and licentious life; nay, worse than all, this first step of vice sometimes leads to the accomplishment of the last resource of desperation, namely, the destruction both of body and soul! In defiance of this dangerous procedure, there are besides many on whom the fire of temptation has, as it relates to this law, no hurt; they can, by God's assisting grace, look upon with the greatest composure, and turn away from objects which their antagonists could not. To those who are the most liable to be so dissatisfied with the portion of goods "that falleth to their share," as to plunder others of their property, St Paul addresses these words,—"Let him that stole, steal no more; but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," is the next commandment that demands obedience. Besides the protestation of false oaths at civil courts of justice, there are other ways whereby this edict may be violated; this Divine law may be transgressed, by speaking ill of our neighbour, or by wounding his

character and reputation by our rash and unjust censure. Were we to look better into the condition of our own hearts, we should find there ample space for reformation; and also, very probably, perceive that we are ourselves guilty of the very sins that we condemn in a fellow-creature. How careful then ought each to be to cultivate in himself a sense of his own unworthiness—of his utter inability to do anything "as of himself;" of the necessity of the assisting aid of the promise of the "Father" to "guide him into all truth;" but, specially, man's undone position ought ever to acknowledge to precedence, his need of a Saviour—a Saviour who, in his tender love toward mankind, left all the glories of His Father's kingdom, and became incarnate; for as it was man who had offended the Most High, it was absolutely necessary that he should bear the penalty of his offence; and "without the shedding of blood, there was no remission of sins." He died for us! He broke down the "middle wall of partition," which the disobedience of our first parents had set up between us and God. He was our reconciliation and Advocate, as He still is, "making intercession for us at the right hand of His Father." In His death He "rent in twain" the ceremonial law of the Mosaic dispensation, for it was no

longer binding; and in its place substituted the free and simple rule of life of the Gospel law—a law, the obedience of which consists not so much in conforming to an outward appearance as in the possession and application of "the hidden man of the heart." Was ever love comparable to this! as for a man "to lay down His life for His friends!" And shall His dearly purchased ones give their Redeemer cause to upbraid them with their ingratitude, as did the lepers whom He healed, thus, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?" Does not such a manifestation of tender compassion towards us call aloud for our sincerest gratitude? And can we better give it expression, than in the devotion of our lives to His glory,—to whom we owe so much—and the good of our fellow-men? Until this result of our thankfulness be kindled and practised, we never can be able to fully appreciate the real worth of this "inestimable benefit;" or, with the angelic host, give utterance to our joy, thus, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

And now follows the last of God's decrees for the regulation of a man's life, to the welfare of his fellow mortals, viz., "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not

covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his." "Covetousness is idolatry," saith the Sacred Volume, and who can doubt of the verity of this assertion? A propensity to this sin is generally the common defect in man's affections, and the main stumbling block in his way in his preparation for eternity; it fetters the soul in its selfish bars, and allows it but little scope for renovation; darkens the understanding, and incapacitates it for the due reception of that which is good; but, specially, this immoral tendency of our nature is culpable of guilt of deeper dye than its interference with our neighbour's well-being; for it divests the Sovereign Ruler of the universe of that command and homage which he ought ever to possess in our thoughts, words, and actions, by setting up in His stead idols of our own, and thereby violating this everlasting decree of the Great Jehovah,—"I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have none other gods but Me."

If it is our lot to be prosperous in the world we ought not then to be puffed up with pride; but, rather, bent down in humility, remembering that, in that exalted position, we are still mortal, and composed but of dust; the day of prosperity ought ever to be a season of liber-

ality to the poor, and of more than wonted thankfulness to our Divine Benefactor, for the unceasing kindness which He is at that time specially pleased to exercise towards us. Nor are they excuses from the line of duty of doing good, who have received little ability for its performance; if we have participated of little, that "one talent" must not, by any means, be concealed or folded up "in a napkin," but be laid out to "usury," in that limited sphere into which it may be our lot in life to be cast. But, above all, we ought ever to bear in mind that we shall one day be called upon to give an account of those talents with which we have been intrusted; that, whether they have been few or many—whether used rightly, or misapplied, we can in no wise escape a just and impartial scrutiny thereof. How very frail and helpless a creature is man! but yet how full of pride and vanity is he! In how many aspects may he be viewed to set up himself in towers of Babel, as though his portion would never be to be cast down in the grave; or, as if this Divine sentence had never to be consummated in him, "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." "The days of man are but as grass;" "for we must needs die, and be as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be

gathered up again." Knowing then how very unstable our own lives are, how rather covetous ought we to be to gain eternal treasures, than for those of a transitory nature; and how, daily, ought we to prepare ourselves to meet that Great God, "before whose tribunal all shall be arraigned."

To our beloved Sovereign, in whom we behold lustrously reflected a perfect confluence of all the virtues that can possibly adorn the Christian character; to her as the annointed of God; as she under whose peaceful government we enjoy so many high and sacred privileges; and to her as the bulwark and stronghold of our temporal rights; it is our duty, as highly favoured subjects, to render loyal and universal allegiance, combined with the fervent prayer that she may long be spared by Providence to be our Queen, our defence, and our example. And, when the spoiling hand of death hath done its work, and after this "earthly tabernacle" decays—which is alike common to all, to rulers as to vassals—may she for ever wear a more glorious crown that "fadeth not away."

To our pastors, those indefatigable shepherds of the sheep of Christ—those faithful messengers, who do, from time to time, proclaim the way to salvation; those vital mediums through

which God's covenant with man is communicated to him, namely, of his utter rejection of those who will obstinately remain disobedient and impenitent; as also of his free pardon, through His dear Son, to those who, with a contrite heart, turn to Him, as sensible of their own unworthiness—and to those devoted brethren whose mission is not of earth, but of one that accompanies our first interest—the interest of our soul; it is our bounden duty to return all that veneration and subjection which their spiritual relation to us demands, and with which their high calling is associated. And yet their united exertions and untiring zeal to serve Him, whose ministers they are, may alike prove unavailing, if His Holy Spirit doth not quicken us, to co-operate our practice with their words, for—

> "Happy are they, and only they,
> Who from thy judgments never stray;
> Who know what's right, nor only so,
> But always practise what they know."

Yea, without the Divine guidance to enlighten our path, their best efforts to promote the glory of God, and the good of the flock committed to their charge, may be fruitless. May their labours be not lost on us, but, by heavenly

grace, tend to bring forth "the fruit of good living," to God's honour and praise; that "when they give an account they may do it with joy and not with grief;" for that, saith the apostle, "is unprofitable for you."

Towards our superiors in rank, estate, or qualification, it is our imperative duty to conduct ourselves with lowly and respectful decorum, as an acknowledgement of the inferiority of our position to theirs; as also an attribute of their pre-eminence over us. How wisely and wonderfully connected is the chain of society! All are not endowed with the same faculty; but every one is in the possession of the same fertility of soil whereon to sow his seed, if he will but cultivate it. Each has a quality to improve on the stormy sea of life, over which all must sail. This gift may, if properly applied, be figuratively attended with the equal brilliant success which rewarded the perseverance of that immortal one, whose astronomical discoveries have been valued as a legacy behind him, and to whose memory those lines are justly dedicated:—

"Nature, and nature's laws lay hid in night;
God said, 'Let Newton be,' and all was light."

The position in which every man is placed is

the most expedient for him; his Creator knows, much better than he does himself, what is adapted to promote, or what has a tendency to injure his moral character. He who regulates the affairs of man always for the best, bestows His grapes off the choicest vine on those of His creatures whose dispositions render them the least liable to be overcome by their insinuating influence. Again, were all architects and none masons, how would the house be built? Thus it is with reference to the subsistence of man; all command an influence in sustaining others. There must be different degrees of operators; in other words it is absolutely essential to the settlement and prosperity of a people that there be legislators as well as ploughmen. Hence, we see in this, as in every other arrangement of an Almighty hand, the wisdom and goodness of God in thus wonderfully linking the human race together; and making each man, in some degree, responsible for the welfare of his fellow-creatures.

Our dealing with our enemies is the next subject that demands our attention. What sublime examples of mercy and pardon to His foes have we illustrated in the humanity of our blessed Lord. When He was betrayed by the traitor Judas, did He resent the premeditated

treason of one of His chosen few? No; for this was His response thereto, — "That thou doest, do quickly." Again, when thrice denied by another of His limited elect, was it with a vindictive look that He beheld him? that his prophetic strength had come to weakness; was it a scource of joy to that Uncondemned One whom he had so cruelly rejected? No, it was not; it was with the mien of tender compassion for his utter helplessness; a look that exerted such a command over the unrelenting feelings of Peter, as to mollify his hard heart, and to stimulate him to go out and weep bitterly. He is delivered up! His passion hour has come! He is set at nought, mocked, spitted on, arrayed in a scarlet robe, and addressed in this contemptible language,—"Hail, king of the Jews!" His accusers plait a "a crown of thorns," and place it on His head; they operate this cruel procedure on that celestial visage before which "the heavens and the earth fly away," as unfit to be gazed on by Him. Does He, in return for this excruciating anguish, resent it? No; "when He was reviled, He reviled not again." Again, let us accompany Him in His mission of love to Calvary—to that conspicuous vale to fallen man, in which the "Magna Charta" of his peace with his offended God was visibly signed and

sealed in the atonement of His own dear Son. Does He recoil from the cruelest of deaths He is doomed to die? No; He willingly bears His cross, "and is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth." And now He is lifted up; huge nails are thrust into His hands and feet; His murderers give Him vinegar to drink mingled with gall; and the ransom of a sinful world is nearly expiated; when, lo! a still, sweet voice is heard proceeding from that sanguinary cross; accents of love and mercy predominate, the Bruiser of the serpent's head gives up the ghost, with this prayer for His enemies upon His lips,—"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Can ever the sufferings of man be parallel with those of his Saviour? And yet, how often does his patience forsake him in those minor trials which confront him on his journey homewards; and how seldom will his haughty and indomitable spirit allow him to submit to the enemy's invasion with resignation. Love towards an enemy is the most conspicuous virtue that can adorn the Christian profession. But do we respond to the dictates of this amiable disposition? Alas, how rather apt are we to hate than to love a foe; to regard with enmity than to

treat with friendship. A proper discharge of this duty is antagonal to our nature; it entirely disagrees with it; but "were we to do nothing but what we liked, there would be no merit in our works," for we only did them because they were agreeable to our taste; we ought also to strive to pursue the path that is contrary to our natural choice, and make it one with that we spiritually love. Besides we ought never to be persuaded that if we resent an injury we do in any wise elevate ourselves; on the contrary, if such conduct reflects any compliment, it is one in the wrong direction to give us credit; for as a learned writer thus well remarked,—"When we return an offence, we are but the equals of the offender; but in passing it over, we are the superiors." Our transactions with an adversary ought always to be regulated in such a course as is best calculated to paralyze him with the strength and purity of our faith, and to generate in him this anxious enquiry of the Philippian gaoler,—"What must I do to be saved?" Seeing then the vanity of our attempts to triumph over another's weakness, let us rather give ear to the injunctions of our high Pattern on this important subject,—"Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I

say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh the sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?" Again, St. Paul enjoins us to "be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." But, above all, a view to promote our own interest should ever further us on in this glorious work—a hope of the pardon and absolution of our own many sins, through Christ, ought to constrain us to forgive those who have merited our vengeance; for these are the words of our shining Example of "patient endurance,"—"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." May we so effectually imitate the footsteps of Him "who made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death, that, when those "Publicans" shall collect their grievous taxes from us, they may find with us nothing wanting.

And now follows the conclusion of the whole matter; the point of rendezvous at which all all other branches of a man's duty towards his fellow-creature meet together; and the golden rule whereby his life ought ever to be regulated, viz:—"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." This is the maxim that ought ever to govern us in our intercourse with the world: and this, the rubric which should daily direct us therein. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law," saith St. Paul. But, let us ask ourselves the question, Who is my neighbour? Is he only bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, who is my fellow-countryman? No; certainly not; the love which the Christian ought to possess, is not a limited, but an expansive love: his out-stretched arms of affection embrace every impression of Adam's stamp within their grasp, be his complexion white, black, or tawny-coloured. His antipathy ought never to resemble that of the Levite, who passed by on the other side from one of his own chosen race, who was suffering from the effects of having been robbed, stripped of his raiment, and left half dead by some ill-disposed one. But, the exercise of that charity

which shines so brilliantly in every true disciple of Christ, should prompt him to put on the appearance of the good Samaritan, (one of another nation, with whom the Jews had no dealing) in coming where he is; and in pouring in his wounds, the balm of that consolation, which he too often in our own day, looks for in vain. Justice is the balance in which all our thoughts, words, and actions, ought ever to be "Shaken together, and running over;" the same degree of compulsion which we observe, in having ourselves rectified, should at all times attend us in our deportment towards those countless myriads who are designated by the name of "neighbour;" but especially those with whom we more immediately associate. That which we would consider unjust in another's conduct towards us, we must in no case practise ourselves, towards him: it is on an equality with our own, that we are to study a brother's benefit: self ought not to be in the front, nor yet in the rear of our affection; but on an uniform centre of gravity with those with whom we dwell: that love which we originally inherit in our nature, ought not to be limited to this one object to any extent; but, in value, equivalent to the charity which we should bear towards others. In order to attain

probably this final completion of a man's second responsibility, it is obviously essential for him to observe the same equity in every respect which he would wish his neighbour to exercise towards him, under similar circumstances.

Love, that noblest passion to which a regenerated soul can aspire to; that pilot-engine of all the rest; that elastic channel through which his sympathy for another's woe is communicated to him; that bright Aurora Borealis, which lightens him in doing good; that "star of the east" which goes before him, whenever he is called upon to take up his cross; and that serene affection of the mind, which calmly ebbs and flows in the tempestuous ocean of life, is the most powerful agent, to stimulate a man to discharge his duty both towards God and his neighbour, with the finest possible accuracy. It was under the immediate influence of this predominant virtue, that Ruth the Moabitess (one of the maternal ancestors of the promised Shiloh), refused to leave her mother-in-law, and to return to her own country: it was in response to this internal advocate, that Boaz, her kinsman, addressed her in this condescending manner, while she was engaged in the humble occupation of a gleaner in his corn-field: "go

not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens:" it was under the dominion of this precedent grace, that Queen Esther hazarded her own life, for the safety of the lives of her people; and the exercise of this celestial proof of a paradise within actuated the immortal part of Jonathan to be knit with that of David, which no malicious stratagem of his father could overthrow. Charity is the purest stream that can empty itself in, or mingle with, its congruent partners, faith and hope, in the opaque path of the orbit of life: for,

"'Tis like refreshing dew, which does
On Hermon's top distil;
Or like the early drops that fall
On Sion's fruitful hill."

It is in accordance with the supplicating entreaty of this anchor of every virtue, that the Christian acknowledges its mark in his forehead, by the superiority of his choice to that of his opposites, in having always his lamp burning, and never extinguishing; it is in the commiseration for another's distress, that he manifests its sway within him; it is in the performance of acts of benevolence or liberality, that he gives publicity to the worth of this precious gem; but,

especially, it is in his anxiety to alleviate the sufferings of his fellow-men, that he owns the debt he owes to his Maker. To visit the sick, the fatherless, or the widow, and to render them that aid, which their positions may require, "to strengthen the hands that hang down, and to confirm the feeble knees," by bestowing on them such words of hope and comfort, as can best be suggested to release them from their tepid state, to one of intenser heat and fervency in their master's service, rank among the noblest pursuits which a man can acquire a taste for, and enjoy a prominent place, through Christ, in his recommendation to God. Can there any thing ennoble a man so much as this, as in the exercise of that power with which all are, to a greater or lesser degree, invested, to improve the condition of his less fortunate neighbour. In all, such an inclination is commendable; if he be classed in the upper department of the school of fraternity, in him such a consecration shines with peculiar lustre; for doing good, is never at the expense of dignity: on the contrary it raises nobility to a still loftier summit. Again, be a man's capacities what they may, if they are not in some degree subservient to the attainment of this silvery design, the application of them is accounted but as dross, in the

sight of Him from whom they all proceed. If, on the other hand, such a disposition among persons who move in the humbler walks of life vegetates into habit; in them, such conduct is equally well-pleasing to God, as in those who possess more influence for its acquisition: if their labours are the result of the seed of charity, by him they will never be disregarded, although their means may restrict them to the offering of the widow's mites. This is that "receipt of customs," at whose portals we ought always and ever to be engaged. Nor does such zeal in another's cause intervene at all in our own interest, or meddle with our earthly vocations: on the contrary, after an act of compassion is performed, there arises a sweet serenity within us, which temporally rewards the effort; so true is it that, "it is more blessed to give than to receive:" but especially, the recollection that we have run another link along the chain of good deeds, which, through Christ, binds us to that fair land where such milk and honey abound as hath not entered into our hearts to conceive, cheers us on our way, and makes us go on it rejoicing. Again, were we to obey all the commandments of God, and yet be without charity, we are still lacking. Neither ought our alms to be diffused in that

vain track, which is transpicuous to gain the esteem or praise of those by whom we are surrounded; if this be our aim, our sacrifices can never be acceptable to him "who looketh at the heart:" nor will He ever fill up the vacuum which results therefrom, by the light of His countenance. Our almsgiving must always be disseminated in such an obscure a manner, as to conceal from our left hand the labour in which our right is employed. We never can aspire to the title of a Christian, until our works be the fruit of the love of Christ that constraineth us: "And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also."

There never can be excuses for ministering aid to the needy or afflicted, on the ground that there are no such objects of charity to be found. Let a man but look around him, and he will at all times perceive many more than he anticipated, who require some nourishment which their pecuniary income will not allow to purchase. In every condition of life, afflictions are common to all: and when they do assail us, their name is not "Legion;" for one generally disappears, before we are called upon to encounter with another; and blessed is he who can, under their ingress, look up with the eye of a

lively faith, and hope to enjoy an uninterrupted tranquillity hereafter, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest." Afflictions are the weapons wherewith our Heavenly Father scourges, and acknowledges us to be his children; they are the expedients used by Him, as well to further our spiritual vegetation, as to alienate our affections from this transitory scene; and, when this desired effect is produced by their instrumentality, when this great end shall have been accomplished, then can we truly feel with that great king from whom the Messiah sprang, that, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." We are morally short-sighted, and know not what is beneficial for us; we cannot tell how that everything works together for our good, but so it is; one Universal Father employs marvellous means, which operate in harmonic coincidence, for the accomplishment of His great love towards us: for

> "God moves in a mysterious way,
> His wonders to perform;
> He plants his footsteps in the sea
> And rides upon the storm."

Can we expect to be enveloped in the light of

His object in thus dealing with man, while weightier truths remain mysteries to us? We cannot comprehend, how that in the Godhead, there are three distinct persons who constitute the Trinity in unity: such we know from Scripture to be the case, but more than this, we cannot fathom. Of the antemundane existence of the "three that bear record in heaven," as also of the co-operation of a plurality of individuals in connection with man's creation, we have the following evidence,—"And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Again, we are restricted to the knowledge of the Godhead and manhood being united in our Lord Jesus Christ, by portions of Holy Writ; to confirm His Divinity this first verse of St. John is devoted,—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;" to verify His humanity, the same evangelist thus asserts,—"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." That our Immanuel was God, His miracles do plainly testify; while His incarnation was ably justified by His possession of the infirmities of other men, "sin only except," in His being sometimes tempted, weeping, wearied, thirsty, hungry, and lastly, in His liability to *suffer* death. If, in all this, our conception is

at the most but dim; and if an invisible being has placed a "flaming sword" before us in our attempts to trace His footsteps, let us humble ourselves under His unerring hand. Let us be meekly resigned to His will, whether in prosperity or adversity; "Knowing that this light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Pride is the barrier which men are apt to erect within them to their own and their neighbour's hurt; its aim is worse than that of those descendants of Ishmael (Arab robbers), who lie in wait to kill or plunder; for it snaps off the branches from the true Vine, into which they were by baptism engrafted, and levels them with the ground. It was pride that would not allow Cain to see his brother's sacrifice accepted while his own was refused! and it was under the influence of this passion that Pharoah would not permit the Israelites to depart from Egypt, until he had been sharply pruned by the sickle of their Mighty Deliverer. To those who possess it, it is the string whereby Satan knots misery and discord together, within their members, as well as such a possession inexpressibly interposes in the discharge of a man's duty towards his neighbonr; for how can

such an one love others as himself, or act towards them with the same impartiality as he would wish them to exercise towards him? Such a procedure in him is impossible; for his conceited mind will not suffer a faithful discharge of this duty which is alike imposed on all. This vice sometimes even arrives at such a meridian in man, as to retard him from following the most profitable of all professions, doing good. Vain man! Let him know that if he would be truly great, he ought first to aim to that degree of goodness and perfection to which it is, by God's grace, possible for vile human nature to attain to. Pride is a habiliment which no son or daughter of Adam has any right to put on. What have we that we can call our own? Do we possess anything but what God has lent us? And can this loan not be taken from us, whenever its Owner pleaseth? Whatever our talents be, they are not our own, but are all bestowed on, and implanted in us by God, and we have but to improve them. "Why is earth and ashes proud?" As evidence of the common mortality of our nature, we sometimes see an infant as soon as it is born it dies; while in another case it is our painful lot to be apprised of the decease of some fellow-creature, who was yester-

day in good health; therefore "pride was not made for men, nor furious anger for them that are born of a woman." May we be willing to part with anything as dear as a right hand, if such an object hinders our eternal salvation. May we so compare our nothingness to the Omnipotence of Him who "resisteth the proud," as to be thoroughly convinced that "we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out;" and may this persuasion quicken us to ascribe "fear to whom fear is due;" for His, and His only, "is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever."

If we know not our duty, both towards God and our neighbour, it is because we will not know it; that we close our eyes on its illustration, as contained in the sacred oracles; and substitute for its punctilious discipline a "golden calf" of our own making, and worship it. If there be found on us "nothing but leaves" when the Great Husbandman requires fruit, and if He shall spare us an additional period of time to lay up a treasure in heaven, if still we make no progress, because there is no depth of earth, then He will no longer extend His clemency; for this will be the immutable decree: "cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" The present only is ours; and only

"now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation;" for this "golden sceptre" is held out to all who will take hold of it: "Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden, and I will refresh you; take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest in your souls." And having been made acquainted with our duty, we ought to fulfil it, "not in the flesh, but in the spirit," as God will not be satisfied with any other service. If Noah had built a tent, instead of an ark, would either his life, or the lives of his family have been preserved? No; certainly not. Were a man intending to cross the Atlantic, would a carriage-and-four convey him to the opposite shore? No; reason tells us that it must be a ship. Again, in the case of Naaman the Syrian, if he had dipped himself in a river of Damascus, would he have been cleansed of his leprosy? or if he had immersed five times instead of seven in Jordan, would the desired issue have been realized? No; decidedly never! Even so must it be with us in the Atlantic of life: if we wish to reap a golden harvest hereafter, we must perform our duty here, in such a scrutable manner as is best adapted to practise this precept in its discharge: "Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you." Besides,

we ought also to use rightly the appointed means of grace which He has provided for the strengthening and refreshing of the souls of His creatures, before we can ever expect to be partakers of the blessings attending thereon. It is by the "sweat of our brow" that we are to eat eternal as well as temporal bread: our Mediator has opened the way which leads to this bliss, but His propitiation cannot of itself save the souls of men; for they must work out their "own salvation with fear and trembling."

Neither can we of ourselves perform any service that is acceptable unto God; if left to our own natural weakness, we are utterly unable to discharge our duties with the least shade of perfection; and without the guidance and strength of the celestial Comforter, we are in comparison to so many ships in a storm. It is only by the help of God's Holy Spirit that we can enter in at the strait gate, or pursue the narrow way with perseverance. This is the "daily bread" for which each ought incessantly to pray; for, saith Christ, "Ask, and it shall be given you." Seeing then that our sufficiency is of God, how assiduous ought we to be to secure His help, which alone can steer us in safety to the haven of rest; for it is the "hand of the diligent only that maketh rich."

On the performance or omission of good works, materially outweighs our acceptance or rejection at the day of judgment: these possess an influence which the discharge of no other branch of a man's duty can be proxy for; for it is mainly by their interposition, through Christ, that the affirmative or negative will be the final sentence which will be passed on every child of Adam, from the first man who has ever breathed, to the last who shall ever breathe the breath of life. And although innumerable inconveniences and dangers may present themselves to our view when called upon to fight this warfare, yet surely the reward is infinitely worth competition, when on our valiancy depends our eternal happiness. May we be willing to endure any transitory hardship to accomplish this great end; and, with the heroine (Grace Darling) to say, "Let us out to sea, a few may yet be saved!"

And now I have by the help of that God "who alone ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it unto whomsoever He will," elucidated this important subject, in this, my humble endeavour. In conclusion, I would suggest, that a well spent life is the most soothing balm that can be applied to the infirmities of old age. To those who have not made Christ their portion,

nor his example of doing good their business, the evening of life may be what the gate of the needle's eye was to a camel to get through it. But to the sincere Christian, neither old age nor death has horrors, for he can look back on his past career with unsullied happiness; on this he does not live alone as "stronger food awaits him than milk which is but for babes," for he feels that death is but the gate which separates him, not from a terrestrial Jerusalem, but an heavenly; and that his more enduring felicity aspires to be enjoyed, when they "who have turned many to righteousness shall shine as the stars in the kingdom of their Father." Now it behoves us to discharge our duty in this sum: let us "take the whole armour of God;" let us "work while it is called to-day, for the night cometh when no man can work;" let us "let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven;" let us "be merciful after our power;" and, let us in every thought, word, and action, "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

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ESSAY IV.

INTRODUCTION.

NEXT in importance to the duties we owe the Divine Author of our being, is that duty of love and subordination to each other. All mankind, in whatever station of life he is placed, shares in some way the effects of this study. From the pomp and magnificence of queenly dignity, to the lowest grade of the wretched mendicant, its benign influence is extended in such measure that though he be sordid and mean in his worldly possessions, yet he has a heart that is ever open to the weals and woes of his fellow-creature; and, by his varied exertions of sympathy towards him, encircles a brighter, and sublimer throne within his own bosom, than kingdoms or empires of earthly glory could ever produce. One may ask, who is our neighbour? Is it alone the tender and affectionate parent, whose love and care has launched our little bark the cradle, off the silver lake of infancy, a mighty vessel to spread her sails o'er the widely

expanded ocean of succeeding years? Is it the loving brother or sister of our childhood, with whom, in the resplendent sunshine of youthful innocence, we've frolicked and gamboled together on yonder flowery meadow, or met at the fireside, the shrine of domestic happiness, where all is smiles, and rosy faces sunlit with the joy of peace and harmony? Is it the fair form of beauty blooming into manhood, who seeks to win the maiden's heart, to turn the thraldom of earth's slavery to love serene, to second paradise? Or is it the friend in need, who ever ready seeks to soothe the aching breast, or breathe a hopeful prayer on dying ears. From the third heaven a still small voice (though terrible) re-echoes, no, 'tis not alone the parent, brother, friend, with whom thou art to mingle in the bliss of love. Go trace the earth, and see if there thou can'st not find some one benighted traveller, for whom to act the duties of a good Samaritan; go feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the widows and the fatherless in their affliction: then shall thy light shine forth throughout the sons of Adam's race. Then the inhabitants of the universe—the children of one common Father, the imagery of one Triune God, linked heart and hand with the spell bound chain of philanthrophic zeal,

shall a life of love, preferring one another. Rom. xii. 10.

1st. We must love our neighbour, which is the whole source of our duty to him.

2nd. This love partakes of two natures; it is a love of complacency, and a love of interest.

3rd. This love must be manifested in all our actions.

4th. The negative duties by which we abstain from injuring any one, under seven heads, viz. —In his person, property, character, knowledge, or belief, in the affections of others, in his virtue, and lastly in his tranquillity.

5th. The positive or benevolent duty which comprehends love for both the temporal and spiritual interests of our neighbour.

6th. The obligations to the duty which are commanded example and conscience.

7th. The advantages which flow from the performance of this duty, viz:—Favour with God, happiness to ourselves, and all mankind.

Conclusion.—The benefits we shall receive both in this life, and that which is to come by the strict observance of this duty.

1.—Having briefly delineated in the introductory passages the moral obligations we owe

to our neighbour, we shall now consider the real nature and essence of this duty, which is love. In speaking of a duty it is generally understood to be a bond or debt we owe to some one in particular. Thus, our duty to our neighbour vividly implies that each one of our fellow-creatures individually retain some strong claim upon us, of which we cannot rid ourselves except by the performance of a duty. The original and very essence of this duty to our brother is love of a pure and undefiled character; not to cherish a mind full of the dross impurities of hatred and malice, but to honour all men, ever bearing in mind that they, like ourselves, are made and protected by the same all-wise Providence; that they too are sharing alike with us the joys and sorrows of a transitory existence; that they too, like us, with the gilded plumage of hope are soaring to the brighter regions of a glorious and blissful immortality. When we think that the green carpet on which we tread; the starry canopy on which we gaze; and the spacious universe in which we live, are all provided by the bounteous hand of Him who makes "His sun to shine on the evil as well as the good, and who sends His rain down alike upon the just and upon the unjust" (Matt. v. 45). How then can we deny

the debt of love to man? The blessed Redeemer exalted on His heavenly throne waits impatiently for every penitent sinner that He may transport their ransomed souls on cherub-wings to yonder orb of light and bloom. He cares not who they be, for he has no respect of persons. The peasant whose daily life is care and toil—the august monarch who occupies yon stately mansion, are all alike to Him so soon as He can clasp them in His arms and call them His. Heaven's arch resounds with sweetest melody, with tongue and harp ten thousand angels welcome their approach; if so, can man —degenerate man—not act according to the will of heaven, and think if God can shew such mercy to a hell-deserving sinner, that man may love his neighbour too. Look back and consider that Christ has a claim upon us, and that we have also a claim upon each other, and that the first motive by which we are indebted to this claim is the rationability of our nature. When first the great Architect of the universe called us into existence "He formed man from the dust of the earth, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul" (Gen. ii. 7), by the power of which he was enabled to reason on the principles of good and evil, to love his Maker with his whole heart,

and his neighbour as himself. The next great theme of our attachment is immortality. How can we anticipate the pleasures of a never-dying eternity, unless we have the love of all engraven on the marble table of our hearts. The angels and archangels that for ever dwell in the presence of the great King, could not be happy, were there not a perfect unison of social harmony among them; so it is with us. It is but a trifling thing to speak of our life here, seeing that it is only encircled by the mere shadow of time; but desert for a moment this island of our past fleeting pilgrimage, and wend thy way to the mainland of eternity, whither we are all bound, and see if the scattered mass of human beings that now occupy our terrestrial globe cannot love each other now, how they can expect to partake of the unsullied joys of angels for ever in the world above.

There are various ways by which we may shew love and sympathy to our neighbour. If he be a wanderer from the sheep-fold of Christ, we may exert our every effort to bring his wayward heart back to its God. If he be poor in his store of earthly goods, can the bright sunrays of a beneficent heart not bestow a tiny mite to stop the leaking vessel, or render its assistance in any case of emergency that might

befall him? If he were in trouble, could not the sympathising tale of a loving friend breathe sweet consolation to his soul? Yes; I speak with the tongue of a Howard, a Thompson, or a Watts; whose loving, humane actions shall shine forth with dazzling lustre from generation to generation, even to the end of time. I could itinerate the universe from the rising to the setting of yonder bright sun, whose sparkling rays shed a benignant influence of purest light for the comfort and happiness of all mankind, and by the quick eye of ready perception at once see all the vicissitudes and wants of my fellow-creatures. I liken the philanthropist to the sun, as I have already observed, the benign influence of light which the sun dispenses throughout the world is deemed an object of great virtue and merit, considering that the unspotted purity of light is so much more attractive to the general eye than the shades of darkness and the gloom of night; so the keen, wistful eye of a devoted philanthropist spreads forth the sunbeams of kindness and true Christian sympathy through the various ranks and stations of mankind, wherever his lot may be cast; the very spot of earth on which he treads, though it were in time past a bleak barren desert, may now be looked upon as a luxuriant vineyard,

loaded with the choicest of grapes; their leaves of silver and their fruits of gold. No matter to what height of attainment his merits have exalted him, humility guides his pathway; he exercises the same degree of generous feeling to the beggar as though he were a king; thus his soul walks abroad in her own majesty, ever cherishing feelings of the deepest gratitude to his God, by whom he has been allowed the privilege of executing so meritorious a deed as the performance of one kind action to his fellow-creature. Such is a worthy man; it is not alone the timid and the ignorant to whose testimony we must refer, for the voices of the warrior, the statesman, and the poet, will be found to mingle with that of the peasant and child, in bearing testimony to the great truth that man only is virtuous in promoting the happiness of man. From the stage of earliest infancy, before our minds were expanded for the reception of any truth, or the knowledge of restraint of any kind whatever, we were the objects of a multiplicity of duties which accompanied our first breath, and never forsakes us until death divides the responsibility from the performer.

The first of these practical duties to which I refer is the love we owe to our parents. The

love we bear to them is a natural love. How can we look upon those so near and dear, who have cherished us in our helpless state, and guided us up to manhood and to womanhood, without feeling a peculiar regard for them which I term a natural love, viz., that which exists, or at all events ought to exist, between every parent and child; therefore, I think it is the bounden duty of all, in accordance with Scripture, to show our subjection and obedience to them, so far as it pleases the will of God, who in the fifth commandment of the moral law, says, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee," and as it is the only commandment with promise should be more strictly observed and adhered to. There are also some obligatory reasons why we should pay this reverence and esteem to our parents. In the varied grades of the lower creation we have a most interesting picture, in the vivid display of natural kindness which pervades that class of beings, and which, I think, might, in some of the prominent features it exhibits, be beneficial to us; in that we are rational creatures, and should exercise the power of reason we possess to its highest limits, in shewing the *deepest* love and gratitude to our parents; first,

because from them we derive our being, because it is by their instrumentality, in the order of Providence, we are formed to move in our sphere of earthly existence as the children of mankind. Let us view this object in another light, also, and see that God, who is not only the Creator, but also the preserver of his creatures, has employed our parents as His earthly agents, not only for the distribution of the riches and luxuries which the world affords for our bodily comforts and enjoyments; but also to act as ministering angels in teaching us that our fixed abode is not here, and that we have a Sovereign Redeemer in the world above, whom we must obey in all things; and that while we are shewing gentleness and docility to them, it is also to our Father in heaven. Like unto an extensive merchant, who (using the phrase of the world) is a rich and great man, having two establishments, one situated in a wealthy and vastly populated city, while the other, of lower denomination, is confined merely to the suburbs of a small town. He finds none adequate to the city business, but places agents to conduct the affairs of the town, which if neglected, what will be the consequences? As soon as the tree begins to fall, what will become of the little branches? alas! they must fall to

Will no blame be attached to us? I almost think there would; supposing we were unwilling to submit to any command or exhortation that might fall from their lips, the fault would, in every sense of the word, be ours.

But let us, while striving to fulfil this prominent part of the Decalogue, introduce another illustrious feature of the moral law, which comprises fraternal or brotherly love. Scripture says, that "there is nothing more pleasing to see than children dwelling together in unity." I think, when I see a family whose hearts are linked together by love's golden chain, that they exhibit a more beautiful scene than any other picture which the mind can conceive. Where the jarring sound of contention never intrudes on the domestic circle, but where all is peace and concord, each one feeling in another the delectable visionary by which he is bound; they not only love each other, but also become exemplary to those around them; no sordid selfishness encroaches upon their breasts; but the seeds of true love are disseminated wherever such ones are found.

2.—This love may be divided into two heads, viz., the love of complacency, and the love of interest. How can God look upon the sinner *as* though he were a saint, or upon the saint as

though he were a sinner? The one is a love of complacency, the other interest. We cannot love all mankind with the same degree of sympathetic feeling that exists between us and our near and dear friends, either by kindred, holy ties, or the bond of Christian relationship. It is a universal love that binds our hearts together; we agree in our opinions, our actions correspond one with another, can converse together, because we both delight to eulogize or condemn the same subject; while on the other hand, the wicked and reprobate character, although he be devising mischief against us, and perhaps is the most formidable enemy we have to contend with, yet still demands as his right some of our love. This is the love of interest. For example we may turn to the sermon on the mount, where the Divine Orator proceeds, "It hath been said of old time, thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy," Matt. v. 43. What was his opinion upon the subject? Listen to His heavenly outpourings to the fallen race of man. "But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, Matt. v. 44, 45. Therefore, if

thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head, and be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," Rom. xii. 2—4.

3.—After diving into the deep channel of love, which is the source of man's duty to his neighbour, we now come to a more open display of it in his actions. I ask, is it sufficient for a man merely to possess a copy of the Holy Scriptures—to have been blessed with kind parents, at whose hand he has received instruction as to its benefits in infancy, while his conscience, seared with a red-hot iron, is quietly sleeping on to eternal death? Or again, is it enough for the mariner in a storm, to speak laudably on the uses of his compass, and on the education he has received with regard to its advantages when required, while his vessel, without a moment's warning, is driven upon rocks, or sands, and may be launched to the bottom of the mighty deep, a wreck? Certainly not. Well then, is it just as essential to man to fulfil the duties incumbent upon him, as it is to rectify the two illustrations I have already pictured? Love without action seems to me to be as null and void as the body without the soul, seeing that man is formed not only to know, but also to avail himself of that know-

ledge by acting in conformity to it. In the sphere in which he is placed, he is surrounded by a class of beings, to every one of which he may be beneficial. It is true there are some who do not need his long continued exertions, which may only be requisite on rare occasions, yet there is a politeness and courtesy due to all, which must not be considered slight from the seeming insignificance of each little separate act, the frequency of their repetition, or the universality of their diffusion, since they contribute so largely to the general happiness, by the amount of good feeling which they cause to exist in every human heart. Nature has not only made it delightful to man to be active, that that propensity to action might lead him to injure as well as to benefit, but she has also with a corresponding provision, placed a monitor within his breast, by which he feels pain from disobedience, and pleasure at the thoughts of a duty when obeyed. It is alone the honour that belongs to the virtuous, the excellency of which no time or power can efface from his heart. By his good deeds he may become the object of resentment and jealousy; he may die at the feet of crowned tyranny and mitred despotism, or draw his last breath beneath the huge hammer of the traitor Guillotine, yet by

the imperishable type of evanescence his name is handed down, till time shall give place to eternity. When man was first created, the Almighty did not intend that he should waste his precious time in idle and wanton pursuits, but that he should be ever unweary in his strenuous efforts both for the good of himself and all mankind. Human life, then, may be truly said to be the exercise of duties, nay, I say it is not worthy of the name of life, unless it is so spent. To have exercised these duties best, is to have lived best, or, at all events, it is to have lived the most nobly. Look at the gallant bravery that attends the patriot so fearless of his life, or anything besides, and see how he quits the dear friends and sheltered home of his native country, boldly to face the fiery action of a formidable enemy in a distant land. Perhaps he is among those whose scanty pittance will scarcely afford the mere necessities of life, no vanities of wealth are in his rustic home, which was only great because it contained a great inhabitant, and no vanities of heraldry are on the simple tomb that encloses the ashes of a good man's repose. This virtue is only admirable in its greatness, when it tends to the accomplishment of all that is morally good, never repining at the common

ills of life, to which all flesh is, and must be subject, but when in calm serenity moving through life, not only delighted to possss these beatitudes, but also to distribute them both by bequeathment and example, it is then an attribute both of glory and renown. In treating upon the practical duties, which are three in number, I consider first, our duty to ourselves, next, our duty to our neighbour, and lastly, the duties we owe to the great God by whose instrumentality we live, move, and have our being. Although the latter does not altogether tend to the establishment of the two former duties, yet it serves to more than double their moral urgency, and by the violation of this one duty, there can be as little real moral excellence as there is in a person, who after boasting of a thousand good deeds, should conclude by confessing that he had never felt the slightest love and gratitude for his parent, than he had done for some generous benefactor who had acted to him like a parent. I now speak of these duties which primarily relate to our neighbour and ourselves. In the earth which is our common home, by far the greater number of its inhabitants have no other relation to us than simply as they are human beings, and may sometimes come within the sphere of our usefulness, which

is not confined to any person or place, though the distance be the most remote; for if we cannot aid them by our visible bodily exertions, next, with her illustrious train, comes benevolence, which is the groundwork of good wishes and prayer. Thus we see that our actions may have unremitting scope to the end, that they may prove a source of help to all mankind.

4.—These offices of duty, of which we have been investigating the source, are specifically arranged into what I term two great generic duties. When I speak of generic duties, I mean the seeds from which all the others grow. The first of these is the negative or denying power, by which we abstain from everything that might prove injurious to our neighbour. The next is the positive, or that which generates the desire in us for the promotion of his good. With the former justice is nearly synonymous, with the latter benevolence; since the desire not to injure is also a wish to benefit. I now proceed to the negative class of duties. We can scarcely conceive the numbers, or give names to the variety of ills, which the wicked and evil-disposed man may scheme to inflict on the one whom he has chosen to victimise, but we may endeavour to draw an outline of the more conspicuous ones. First, by his evil pro-

pensities he may affect the sufferer directly, in his person, his property, his character, in the affections of others, in his knowledge or belief, in his virtue, and lastly in his tranquillity.

1.—Of the various ills we may inflict on the person of another, murder, I need scarcely say, is the most atrocious. It is the only crime altogether irreparable by the perpetrator; yet he is often led to its dire commission by envy, jealousy, revenge, sudden passion; and may be sometimes the only means he can scheme for the accomplishment of some sordid end. It is a sin of a heinous nature in the sight of heaven, being the direct violation of the sixth commandment of the moral law, which says "thou shalt not kill." Murder existed from the earliest ages, and still continues to be practised; but, as I have before observed, God, who is the preserver of His creatures, has provided against the frequency of a crime the results of which are attended with so many evils by rendering the contemplation of it to the murderer something of a disagreeable nature, which perhaps is the only item of humanity that then exists in his adamantine heart. When we read of the assassin, in the agony of his soul, coming forth to confess the brutal commission of a crime en-

shrouded in oblivion of the past, forgotten altogether by those who, at the time of its occurrence, crowded to the newspaper vendors to gain full particulars of the fatal deed, and rushing a motly throng to the placarded walls of the city, anxious to lose nothing of the affair which caused such deep excitement in all classes of the people; while he, in some corner exites no interest, little thinking the cause of the deep melancholy brooded on his countenance; the wasted cheek, and hollow eye, till he appears before the guardians of that one whom he has chosen to deprive of the life which at that time no earthly power could save. We cannot account for this. We may suppose it something of a supernatural character, but I say, no; ghosts, fairies, and the like have vanished from our land together with the superstition that succoured their existence. The commission of such a crime as this, whether premeditated or not, stains the conscience with a deep sense of horror and conviction when the criminal realizes the awful thought that he not only deprives his victim of life but also launches his soul into a sudden eternity unprepared to meet its God. The thief may plunder, or the traitor betray, without any moral emotion of this kind; but let one human,

being give his last gasp beneath the dagger of another, and although superstition may be said to have fled, the deed of this one individual is sufficient to call it back.

2.—The next species of injury I allude to is that which relates to the property of another. Supposing we were to notice for the first time, the unequal distribution of property in the amphitheatre of social life without taking into account the amount of happiness to which this unequal division is subservient; we should be apt to observe, with no small degree of wonder, the seeming rapacity of the few and the acquiescence of the many. On the one hand we see the dazzling panorama of august living displayed on the highest stage of its magnitude; the lofty turrets and stately corridors of patrician grandeur, the arched dome towering to the clouds, where sits, enamelledin costly magnificence, some haughty lord, who, mindful of his high position, disdains to think himself subordinate to either God or man; while in yon shaded grove sits, clothed in unassuming modesty, the low thatched cottage, the sphere of plebeian life, where happiness and innocence combined reign triumphantly: where the artificial works of mechanism and ingenuity have never toiled, but beautified alone by nature,

glorious nature, proves to the noble heart the richest home. It is natural to the carnal mind to seem unsatisfied at the idea of one living in luxury, while another is the object of never-ceasing toil, and be fully acquainted with the fact that when his labours cease, his supplies will also terminate; yet as it pleases God, in the dispensations of His Providence to clothe one of His creatures with riches, and another with poverty, they must not repine since all things are under the order and governance of a supreme Being, whose very nature and essence is love, and His every action wisdom. In the routine of daily life, we see a thousand poor creatures toiling and moiling without much pecuniary aid, to keep one who is their head in extravagance and wealth; yet it is essentially necessary that there should exist high and low, rich and poor; to the end that they may unite in cultivating and civilising the earth. The rich have advantages over the poor, and often exercise their authority in every way possible; but the features of poverty when magnified by the lenses of the telescope of Christian humility, reflect to the mind a much more pleasing scene than could be anticipated by the cold frigidity of an indifferent and careless train of ideas. Christianity sees that the same God, made all

and, with the Apostle Paul, that "godliness with contentment is great gain." Christ beautifully illustrates the blessedness of the poor when on the mount, He says "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." And again, in a conversation with His disciples, where He allegorically represents the rich young man who preferred earthly wealth to a place in the Lamb's Book of Life, that "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." This rule is not applicable in every instance: Christ never meant it; but the antithesis is so great, the rich man who clothes in purple and fine linen and fares sumptuously every day, is apt to forget God, being surrounded with so many worldly pleasures; while the poor are often led by their poverty and adversities, to seek refuge in His lovingkindness and tender mercies, which never fail. Avarice violates the tenth commandment of the moral law, which is "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's;" therefore the robber who plunders the goods of another, sometimes not so much for his own advantage as for the

pleasure he seems to feel at the ravages he has committed, must know that he not only mars the happiness of one single individual, but proves a source of injury to the community of manind.

3.—The next mode of injury I proceed to, is that which belongs to the character of another. We cannot fully estimate the injury we may inflict on another in wounding his reputation, by the advantages that attend an honourable and virtuous character. The mind of the virtuous is sufficient to itself: yet it is more pleasing to them to be accompanied in this path of duty by others than to become objects of their contempt and scandal. The wicked value real moral excellence so little that, if their way could be carried out, in a very short period virtue, with all her intrinsic worth, would cease to exist. Since they cannot, by their utmost endeavours, injure the mind of the virtuous, every little imperfection in the human heart is a feast to their reprobate calumny, I say it is not alone our duty to love the good, but, even in our indignation against the wicked, to mix a portion of sympathy, which would even lead us to wish that their names might also be added to the list of the virtuous. You may scandalise a person, and if he find it out he will be your enemy, and if he remain in ignorance

of it you will still have to reproach yourself with the cowardice you have displayed in attacking one who had no power to defend himself; therefore, in secret, scandal is the crime of a coward, and openly the crime of a madman. It is not wrong to lament over guilt, if we do truly lament over it, but it must be with the sorrow of a lover of human kind, who is forced to add another moral ill to the catalogue of human delinquencies This is the generous spirit in which we ought to act: choose rather to speak of the virtue than of the failing; and consider, not only what the individual is, but also the wayward imperfections of human nature. When the propagators of tales of scandal think they have truly justified themselves by sketching, with the minute eye of strict scrutiny, all the faults of another, they forget that along with these delinquencies, there are qualities of intrinsic excellence, which they have either forgotten or disdained to speak. In a word, I assert that in every human being there is something illustrious, and something which obscures his perfection; therefore, in the omission of every virtue, and the elucid display of every vice without any violation of biographic truth, the most pre-eminent are cast into the shade. Sometimes this evil

arises from envy and malice; but as often from ill-breeding and ignorance. We seldom find two persons together, but the sacrifice of a third is the chief pleasure of their conversation. Therefore our utmost endeavour on that point should be, to apply ourselves to wisdom, which refines and cultivates the mind to see so great a number of faults in ourselves, that we never find time to degrade another.

4.—We deem it obvious, that it lies in our power to injure the person of another in many ways; and that, in the obligations to abstain from it, there exists a co-extensive variety of duty. After considering the three modes of injury we can inflict on the person, property, and character of an individual, I now proceed to the fourth in order, which demarcates the evil that arises from robbing him of the affections of another, which may be termed a kind of property that he lawfully possesses. The sweetest affection that flows from the springs of a pure heart is conjugal love, or that for which a similar affection has been paid, and to which the laws of wedlock have given a legal and holy title. Considering this the most important emotion of the heart, I devote to it a few brief remarks. Were we to estimate the guilt of the robber according to the evil which

he knowingly produces, where is it that our most indignant hatred of the crime should be fixed? Not alone on him who is commonly termed a robber; who, for some mean wrong is sentenced to ignominy of the scaffold. Surely not, but on him who is the robber of a higher rank, who would even disdain to have his name mentioned among the plebeian classes of society. While the crowd are gazing on the lifeless corpse; watching with eagerness, deeming the punishment received scarcely remunerative to the deed committed; the stately carriage stops; its august passenger reclines to view the consternation; mingling with the throng, he feels astonished at the progress vice is making, and zealously moralizes on its amendment at some future time; while the very carriage in which he moralises at his ease is swiftly bearing him to the house of those whom he has robbed of that innocence and happiness to which they never shall return. Such an one may be truly denominated a plunderer of the very worst kind. His heart begrimed with wickedness and vice, he turns the social earth around him which God has made so beautiful, into a world of deceivers and the deceived.

5.—The next duty on which I treat, relates to the knowledge or belief of others in refer-

ence to our language or conduct towards them, which is intended to supply the place of language, by the meanings, true or false, which we may convey to them. As so much of the happiness of the social world depends on dissemination of those principles of veracity, it is no wonder that, in every nation and age, it stands high among the classical virtues. The wilful abuse of it, if put into constant practice, is sufficient to throw the enlightenment of the age in which we live, into that dark state of cruelty and barbarism which reigned predominant at the time when Julius Cæsar, by his more refined genius and skill, invaded with an almost invincible army of Romans our native island of Albion. It is therefore an acquisition which all should attain to, to speak truth between man and man, as the injuries of falsehood spread their malignant influences over the young mind as well as over the illegible capacities of old age. The great evil that arises from fiction, exhibits itself clearly when it causes us to doubt whether or not it be really true. We abstain from this mode of injury, not from any propensity of our own, independent of experience and reflection, but merely for the advantages of society at large, and the moral disapprobation we bear to deceit.

6.—Having shown how we may injure an individual in the affections of another, I now proceed to the last two modes of action which may be productive of hurt to all. In the first place, directly by our seductions, or indirectly by our example, we may injure the virtue of another. The very name, seduction, conveys to the mind a direct allurement to guilt which no other name is assigned, when we consider that it is a species of the worst kind of injury and worthy of no other name. First think of the evil that succeeds the persuasions of a few fatal moments. The adulterer by his oily sinuation, does all in his power to gain influence, by a passion which he dishonours with the name of love, over the heart of her he only desires to victimize, and after his mere sensual appetite is gratified by the pure simplicity that lent an attentive ear to all as truth, he flees in triumph from the wreck and ravage which he has caused, leaving the frail outcast an object of contempt and suffering. Amid the sighs and tears of sorrowing parents, weeping sisters, and the heartfelt grief of all attached, he is unmoved; the heart that can cause such calamity, can brave the storm in mocking gallantry. Such is the seducer, and his achievements. Sometimes, when actions do not reach seduction, there may be

something injurious in the example they convey to those around. We are formed to live together in society, and it is consistent with the principles of reason, that there should exist in that society, a uniformity of manners, customs, &c., to the end that it may be founded on a firm basis of union. (For example.) A king leads a very improper life; he spends his time on feasts and festivities, instead of attending to the political affairs of his cabinet, little thinking that like the seducer he is establishing bad principles in his government, and showing a bad example to the country over which he presides.

7.—The last species of injury I notice, affects the mental tranquillity of another. We may think that this power can only be exercised in the highest classes of society, where the proud in their haughtiness, delight to make those beneath them feel their abject inferiority to them, but this is not the case. There is existing in the heart of every one we meet with latent emotions, which a few hasty words may call forth to anger; therefore, seeing that every individual may exercise such influence over another, let us strive to guard against this evil by the dictates of a pure conscience, that acts only on the moral principles of that right

and wrong which is not coeval with the origin of nations and cities, nor even with the world, but which is contemporary with the very eternity of God himself.

V. In concluding my remarks on the negative duties by which we abstain from the wilful injuring of any one, directly by our seductions, or indirectly by our example. I now come to the positive, which forms the desire in us for the promotion of his benefit. We may abstain from everything that bears a tendency to injure, yet if we exert no influence that may be beneficial, the world is just as if we had not been. There are miseries in existence which perhaps we have not contributed to realize, yet if we deem it not a duty to hurry to their extinction, we are only—if I may so express myself—half virtuous, since the first part of virtue is the abstinence from injuring our fellow-creature; the next to do all in our power to be actively useful to them. I picture whole families moving in the same sphere which we ourselves inhabit, who may be in circumstances of great distress, which a single word, or even a glance expressive of a kind wish, would be sufficient to remove from them, and to renew that happiness which would otherwise have been wholly wanting. Yet if we are only nega-

tively useful, we see no happiness produced by our exertions, or even misery in any way tolerated. Nature, then, when she conferred on us so many useful facilities, did not leave us destitute of the wishes that tend to their promotion; she has given us a benevolence that desires the good of all, and if one single opportunity of making ourselves beneficial is allowed to escape, conscience reproaches us with a voice not easily stilled. Thus we see that by the one we desire the welfare of another; and by the other we work to gain that pleasing wish. It is to the latter I confine my few remarks. So stupendous is that benevolence that links together man and man, that some rigid questioners of the feelings of humankind think it requires proof, but if they will allow virtue to be more than a name, they will at once see that there are none who will deny to benevolent exertions, the due praise of their excellence. I fancy it is proof enough to trace the footsteps of a Howard through the dark dreary dungeon of the exiled convict, and the lazar house of the sick, where nothing is to be seen but the squalid feature of the diseased and dying, to engrave on every heart the intrinsic excellence of that benevolence for which some would even deny themselves of every earthly

comfort. It is the idea of certain individuals, that this virtue can only be extended by pecuniary means, but he is possessed of a narrow heart who allows this chimera to exist. If the beauties of true benevolence depended on pecuniary aggrandisements alone, no good could be accomplished unless by the countenance and patronage of the rich; but, no, she extends her benignant influences over every creature, and those who cannot by the advantages of wealth, tend in any way to the help of their fellowmen, can, by their counsels, cares, good wishes, protection and friendship.

VI. Next in order, I place the obligations to the duty which are three in number; viz., conscience, command, example. "The will of God," says Archdeacon Paley, one of the most popular of our ethical writers, "is our motive, but private happiness our obligation." But who can stand at the base of Sinai's Mount, mid the volleys of smoke and thundering voice of the Lord God Omnipotent; and see the tables of stone produced by the hand of God himself, without feeling it a duty to obey the Divine dictates of that awful and terrible King of kings and Lord of lords! The same inspired law which the Israelites copied so zealously, remains with us, and therefore we are bound in giving the glory

that is due to the name of that sublime law-giver, to dedicate ourselves to the perfect obedience of His will. The first great commandment is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and the second is like unto, it to love our neighbour as ourselves; on these two, says the blessed Redeemer, "hang all the law and the prophets." In the fifth commandment, which is, "Honour thy father and thy mother," it is not alone our parents whom we must love and obey, but every one who is above us in rank or station, even as the lower angels show their love and subjection to the cherubim and seraphim in the kingdom of heaven: that it may bring honour, glory, power, and dominion, for ever and ever to the Lamb that sits upon the throne, who hath given us an example that we may walk in love; as He, the Saviour of man also did. While he inhabited the praises of eternity, he disdained not to mingle with poor sinful man. He went about raising the dead to life, healing the sick from all diseases, curing the maim, the deaf, and the blind, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom to dying souls. His whole life was a round of never changing love. See how the evangelists speak of His actions; how

he was found at the early age of twelve years in the temple with the learned doctors of the law, hearing and asking them questions; and when rebuked by his parents, how willingly he submitted himself to their care, and became subject unto them. The contemplation is awfully grand to the mind of the believer, heavenly glory clothed in earthly humility an example to all. See with what marked reverence he honoured his Father, God, and likewise regarded the laws of man; and, on being asked by the mocking Pharisees to whom they should pay tribute, he mildly answers, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's." And when He knows that the time is fast approaching that He shall quit the earth, and again resume His glorious abode beyond the spangled firmament on high, how implicitly He exhorts His children to love:—A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another, as I have loved you; and thereby shall the world know that ye are my children if ye love one another.

VII. There is a sensitive, intellectual, moral, and religious being; and as his mortal career is but the twilight of that boundless eternity to which his soul is progressively hastening, it is of the greatest importance that he should find

favour with the august Author of his being, by whose Almighty fiat he was called into existence, by whom he was exalted to the highest pinnacle of heavenly dignity: being made in the image of God himself, "only a little lower than the angels and crowned with glory and honour, and after his apostate downfall how he was undeniably furnished with the hope of salvation by a Redeemer. When nothing on earth could atone for his guilt, the sweet breezes of heavenly consolation wafted their odoriferous fragrance to the innermost region of his convicted soul, in deepest accents of unbounded joy, "Deliver me from going down to the pit, for I have found a ransom;" and "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Dear reader, pause for a moment, and consider that God has created you, that he is your preserver and benefactor, and that every moment of your life your soul flows with genial reminiscences of angelic love, that the increasing stream of heavenly mercy re-echoes back to your troubled mind, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Consider, too, that you have bright allurements on high, "A mansion in the skies, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," whose architect is God, whose chief corner-stone and foundation is

Christ, and whose furnisher is the Holy Spirit. And when you begin to feel that God has done so much for you, that Christ too has done much for you, and that the Holy Spirit is also doing much for you; you will then begin to reflect, and wonder if there is nothing you can do for God in order to recompense Him for all His gifts to you, and exclaim, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." But this is not all; you must shew this love to your fellowman, in accordance with the Saviour's command: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature;" and teach him the path that leads to the favour of Divine majesty. The Bible, with its glittering pages of illumined instruction, says "he that converts one soul from the error of his ways shall hide a multitude of sins." And, in endeavouring to promote the happiness of every creature, we are establishing a firm foundation for our own: always imitating the Divine principles of that golden rule "Do unto others even as ye would that they should do unto you." If every one enclosed a copy of this law in his heart, and followed its directions in every thought, word, and action to his neighbour, whether to his brother in Christ or his deadly enemy, the blessings

flowing from it would be innumerable as the grains of sand upon the sea shore. What a metamorphosis would ensue in every country, nation, city, town, family, and not only in these but in every soul that breathes! Instead of the fretful perturbations of malice, would be the sublime results of universal love. It would break down the barriers of discord between the nations, and build in the place thereof, peace and pure happiness; instead of having officials to protect our lives and goods, we should alike enjoy the blessings lent us from above; and finally this earth, sheltered by the bright blue canopy of yonder ethereal sky, and enshrouded with the flowery pleasures of universal loveliness, would reflect to the mind the enjoyments of heaven itself. In conclusion, in the resurrection morning, I ask who will be jewels in the untarnished crown of the Redeemer, when "He shall be seen coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, with all His holy angels, taking vengeance on all that know not God, and when the redeemed of the Lord shall come to Zion, with joy and gladness to be partakers of the things prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and the wicked shall flee in terror from the presence of their Judge, shouting "rocks hide us, mountains

fall on us, that we may escape the presence of the King at the tribunal of the last great day." Who then I ask, will be the chosen ones of God? Amidst the tumult of the awful scene, I heard a voice from heaven saying, "give me those who have walked in love, who have shewn love to me and to their fellowmen, who 'have given a cup of cold water to any of my little ones, for as they did it unto them they also did it unto me,'" that I may pluck their ransomed souls to deck my glorious diadem through the ceaseless ages of eternity. We cannot love God if we love not our neighbour, who is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh and is in every way like us a child of our Father in heaven; and if any man say that he love God and hate his brother, he is a liar, and therefore cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. Dear fellow-sinners, I exhort you, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be subject unto love, to be kindly affectioned one to another.

ELIZABETH JANE BROWN,

AGED 18 YEARS.

9, *Napier Street, Scotswood Road,*

Newcastle-on-Tyne.

ESSAY V.

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God!
O *Duty*! If that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou, who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free,
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace,
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face.
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong,
And the most ancient heavens, through *Thee*, are fresh and strong.

To humble functions, awful Power!
I call Thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour,
Oh let my weakness have an end.
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give,
And in the light of truth thy bondman let me live.

WORDSWORTH.

EVERYTHING has a part to perform in this vast universe. The Mighty Architect made his work complete; not a stone was wanting, not one was superfluous. His design was great and grand, and much there is seen beautiful and majestic, but nothing without its use. All grades of creation from the granite rock and yielding earth, through the quadruple elements and the various organisms of creature-life up to man, have spheres of action allotted to them. In their adaptation there is consummate perfection. The oak climbs not as the vine; the eagle roosts not as the hen; the lion labours not as the horse. There is much in this universal adaptation that is hidden from us; mysteries which we cannot penetrate any more than the secrets of eternity. But we are not therefore left in doubt, we judge of the things that are unseen by the things that are seen. We are assured as to the unrevealed purposes of nature, by the fact that the unseen jars not with the seen. So well balanced is the universe, that disorder in one part must disturb the whole, and therefore, if order reigns in one part, we know that order rules the whole.

Among all things so fitly constituted for each other, *man* takes his sovereign place as Creator's chief masterpiece, and to him, more richly endowed than all else beneath the

heavens, are allied great purposes and manifold obligations; even to all that is beneath him he has a duty to perform for his own comfort and existence, else the earth would not render him good, nor the horse service, whilst unto his "Father who made them all," his life has to be a constant devotion. In this his unintermitting round of duty, that which he owes to his fellow-man, has a forward place. It is prominent and conspicuous as "a city set upon a hill which cannot be hid." On no account has it to be neglected; under no pretence to be evaded. For him to be an anomaly of license and disunion, would be to destroy the concord of nature, and truly would—

> "The pillared firmament be rottenness,
> And earth's base built on stubble."

The birth and necessities of man speak to him of this duty. He is not born of chaos by "a fortuitous concurrence of atoms," nor is he sustained by a series of happy contingencies. He comes from parents who, fulfilling a duty beyond their own selfish interest in their own life, bestow life on him. His infant years are watched by affectionate eyes, and tended by loving hands; he is nurtured by the bountiful produce of the fields and the wonderful ministration of the elements.

The advancing years of youth and manhood preach the same lesson; the cultivation of his intellect can only be accomplished by community with his fellows. The teachings of antecedent history, the instruction and counsel of the prophets and sages, *all* that man *is*, comes from circumstances and things which fulfil a duty beyond that required for their own self-existence, and in this way man finds himself naturally and unavoidably linked to his brother-man by a golden cord which he cannot break without exhibiting himself as an ingrate to be shunned and detested by all.

There is, however, a higher and even more certain informant of this duty than this subtle connexion and dependence. The breath of life breathed into us by our great Father, raises its voice within the tabernacle of the heart for ever and for ever, on the same divine theme. Let us indulge our senses, satiate the eyes with the beautiful, the taste with the delicious, the ear with the harmonies, smell with sweetness, and touch with luxuriousness, and still there is something unsatisfied. Nor can this longing of the soul be gratified, except by the knowledge of our having performed a good and virtuous part. Nothing will compensate for the neglect, and though we may stifle its articu-

lations by the excitement of pleasure, it returns upon us with fearful retribution in the awful hours when the world can neither soothe nor distract.

We may also consider the way, subtle but efficacious, in which nature has bound us up with fellow-man in the relations of life, and which will at each step show the necessity and enjoin the performance of duty towards him. Thus we commence our earthly being under the roofs of our parents,—but towards them we have an attachment which is not proportioned to any assistance they may give us. There, too, we are bound by strong ties to our brothers and sisters which no misfortune can dissever. This affection is an instinct of the soul; and so we find the fire of duty first lighted upon the domestic altar, on which like the priests of old at their sacred office we have to wait continually, that it be quenched neither day nor night.

In our alliance with one of the opposite sex, our duty is again made apparent. Perhaps in marriage it is still more distinct than in the parental and filial spheres. For here our partner is removed from our kindred. It is even a provision of nature that intermarriage of families vitiates the race; those with whom we join ourselves come out of the common world. Yet

what a marvellous effect does that being produce towards whom our affections flow. Her form seems akin to the angels; her voice to us is "far above singing;" pleasure and benignity wait upon her.

> "Grace is in all her steps; heaven in her eye;
> In every gesture dignity and love."

In her presence we are wrapt in delight; in absence her memory fills us with constant bliss; under her influence our sympathy enlarges and humanity comes closer than ever to our heart. Then in the eye of day and before the view of men we take her to our home, to cherish and support till life's latest hour. In all which we symbolise our feelings and conduct towards mankind when actuated by the zeal of duty, who, though they be not under the same roof, are under the same blue vault of sky.

In the fruit of marriage, too, we are drawn a step still further amongst our fellows; for thereby we are linked with a new race whose welfare is as dear to us as the ruddy drop within the heart. By which means not only have we to attend to the contemporary age, but it is part of our lot to mould the age that has to follow.

Now the duties that spring from these domestic attachments, it requires no argument to

prove, no forcible language to set forth. They are known and felt of all men. If we should deal so wickedly as to slight them or war against them, all our pretensions of philanthropy are but an empty show, and our fair actions the whitewashing of a rotten sepulchre. What a painfully illustrious example has the world seen in "the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau;" a man who was of most powerful mind, and with it he strove to counterbalance his immorality. He "exhausted the stores of his powerful rhetoric in the expression of universal benevolence, whilst his heart was incapable of harbouring one spark of common parental affection." He sent his own children to the hospital for foundlings, whilst he descanted on kindness to the whole species. By the force of his genius his writings became popular, and his philosophy became the philosophy of France. History tells us how well the fruit corresponded with its monstrous origin. The reign of his disciples was the *reign of terror*. The ties of kindred were repudiated, and the affection that had to be transferred from them to mankind exhibited itself in such corruption, lawlessness, strife, devastation, slaughter, and wide-spread immorality as finds no parallel in the world's records. This was the French revolution, and

such consequences must always follow such a cause. The stream poisoned at its fount can never after be pure and health-giving.

From our domestic circle we emerge into the world by many ramifications. We cannot indeed shut our kindred within a room and bar all other men outside our interests; our interests, our requirements, our humanity, brings us into the community. Acquaintance and troops of friends draw us from the pool of domesticity into the stream of human life.

In the *community* need we say how many monitors there are of a duty to fulfil to our fellow-man. We come into it to be assisted, and we must in turn assist; each must work; wheel must move within wheel. If there is any inaction or indifference all goes awry, and the intention of the association is baffled. The evidence of the necessity of unsleeping vigilance is written on every leaf of the history of every community. In the early annals of our own country, we find a beautiful example of the true actions of citizens in the numerous divisions and subdivisions throughout the kingdom, independent in their rights yet bound to succour each other. Particularly was it shown in the custom of Decennaries, whereby every ten men throughout the land were bound together and

made responsible for each other. A nation was thus governed without police or standing armies; and not until this "silver chord was loosed," did the more expensive and more dangerous machinery come into operation. Nevertheless, responsibility lies as heavy as ever on each citizens shoulder, contributing as he does his influence to mould the circumstances of his neighbour's, and his quota of means to uphold regulations and those who carry them into effect.

What the family is to the community, the community is to the *nation*. Our country is but a family of communities associated together for safety and happiness. To that we find ourselves issuing from the stream of social life into a wide river of human intercourse. How stand we then in the *nation*? Are we to be passive and inert, and, regarding its condition submit as to a destiny of chance? No! that cannot be. We are its component parts; we are the nation itself. If it errs it is because we err; if it is holy it is because we are holy; its crimes are our crimes; its glory is our glory. Towards the laws therefore, and those who frame and carry them into effect, indeed, over the whole behaviour of the nation we have to exercise a jealous supervision. And this we have to

extend, not simply to what occurs within the limits of our country but to its conduct. For our kingdom is itself but one of the family of nations, on which point the laws of nations themselves declare, "the end of the great society established by nature between all nations is a mutual assistance for the improvement of themselves and their state. The first general law, which the very end of the society of nations discovers is, that each nation ought to contribute all in its power to the happiness and perfection of others."

Here, then, we stand amidst millions of our fellow-creatures with the bright heavens above us, where the God of all abideth whom we have continually to serve, and whose divine command is that such service consists greatly in loving and assisting this our universal brotherhood. If we shall not duly and faithfully perform this, history tells us in words of fire of retribution that falls on individuals, on groups, and on nations for such neglect and which also must be our doom; but if on the other hand we shall fulfil it, the felicity which attends even the most obscure and persecuted of Christians, informs us how rich a pleasure we shall attain.

Now in order perfectly to know and fully to perform our duty to fellow-man, it is neces-

sary that it be grounded on *religion*. Although the simple knowledge of this duty be instinctive, this is not sufficient to settle the subject. Selfishness and passion are continually at war with it, and we could not set down man's appetites and desires as a chart for the guidance of society. Union would then be that of scorpions linked together. Duty is generally the very reverse of what man is prone to, it is a strict general set over an army of passions and desires, mutinous against the career which is best for each and all in this world and that hereafter. It seem impossible, indeed, for the high dictates of our duty to be anything more than a mere formula of words or an empty ritualism unless it has some fount from whence to draw its inspiration, some higher Being to revere, and some spiritual hope to look to. The reality would soon vanish from the earth were there the rigid certainty that in serving the present all would be served. But religion makes duty sacred and inviolable; points it out as the source of present comfort and the purchase of eternal joy, and shows it to be the very life of man's life. Look what a pearl it is even in human policy: "A serious attention to obtain in all our actions the approbation of an infinitely wise Being, cannot fail of producing

excellent citizens, for rational piety in the people is the firmest support of a lawful authority, and in the sovereign's heart is the pledge of the people's safety, and produces their confidence." So writes the great expositor of international law. How valuable then is religion, when it not only produces such harmony here, but ingratiates our good Creator and secures us an eternal participation of His holy presence. Happy are we in having such a religion—a religion which acts with the twofold power of example, as well as precept, which double method of exhortation we shall briefly glance at. And first as regards—

Precept.

It is to the Bible that we look as the cabinet of both the preceptive and exemplative teaching of our religion, and as regards the point on which we are engaged, whilst our Scriptures overlap all humanity, and deal with the whole of man's actions, they stand forward as the gem of all human productions. Their living truths flash like stars upon the benighted mind; even as those orbs of light in the hours of darkness show the vastness and majesty of the universe, so do the lines of Scripture illuminate the mind as to the glorious and eternal destiny of its possessor.

It is also a virtue inherent in great truths that they fasten to the memory on their first hearing, and can never be wrested from their place. Many men, too, have been immortalized by the expression of a single one, when otherwise their names would have been forgotten. But the Scriptures from their commencement to their conclusion teem with such arrow-like truths, and we find that every language into which they have made an entrance, enriches itself with the use of them as idioms and classic phrases. When Hazlitt commenced his lectures on dramatic poetry, speaking of the Elizabethan era when shone the meridian splendour of our literature, it was to the Bible (then newly translated), that he attributed the sudden enlargement of the English mind, and the rare fruitage of its intellect. So potent and beneficial was the introduction of the Scriptures into our own language. In their holy leaves is found consolation for every phase of adversity; whilst there are continual warnings against every condition of loftiness and backsliding. We find clear and particular directions for the whole duty of man, such as no other book or compilation of books can give; and it was no inferior part of our Saviour's mission to embody in his life the teachings of

this Holy Book. He was a comment and exemplification of the power of the sacred text given first by God to Moses for a guide to the children of Israel, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," (Lev. xix. 18,) and confirmed by the Divine lips of Christ himself, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, this is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."—(Matt. xxii. 5.)

Now these words which we have twice quoted from the grand master-precept of man's duty to man, we may take as a compendium of all that is otherwise given on the subject in Holy Writ, diffusely and in application to particular instances. And where in all the world shall we find so terse and glorious a precept? We might dwell for hours on its beauty and significance. We must have love, that most intense of human affections, more powerful and enduring than the darkest and most malevolent of passions, even to the subduing of them. That heavenliest of feelings; "For love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that

loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." (1 John, iv. 7.) This love has then to be given to ourselves because we are of God, created "in His own likeness and image," we have God-like qualities, and duty done to Him we return. The full force of this expression is not, however, conceivable without considering the peculiarities of the oriential region where it was spoken. In the Mosaic dispensation, innumerable ordinances have the special view of keeping the mind and body in a healthy condition. From the fierce heat of the climate in those parts, it is necessary to pay strict attention to personal cleanliness, and this is seen at this day inculcated in the Chinese religion, where the son preserves his frame from defilement, lest he should cast dishonour on his parents, in the Hindoo religion, where pernicious meats, and liquors are strictly forbidden, and in the Mussulman religion, where the hot-air bath, miraculous in its revivifying powers, is an institution. But this love has not to be confined to our own frame and intelligence as that of the self-worshipper Adonis, of the Greek legend. It has to go forth. It has to issue as the beams of the sun, to beautify and enrich the world, whilst in itself it must ever be replete with heat and glory. Unlimited to ties of con-

sanguinity, it must include them whilst embracing our "neighbour." Our "neighbour" is a son of the same great Father and has a destiny similar to ours. He requires our assistance and we require his. We are as it were a portion of each other; therefore our love has to be bestowed upon him. The old—old question of the lawyer to Christ then presents itself, "Who is my neighbour?" In common phraseology, a neighbour means one who dwells in proximity to us. And the language of Scripture, simple and appropriate, instead of presenting a perplexing proposition, has given us a very happy phrase. We know the attachment that generally exist between neighbours; there is an interchange of favours and kindness. To the eye of God, then, enthroned above the universe, the inhabitants of our world are neighbours on a common sphere. Thence comes the great language which calls the whole of mankind by that homely and significant term "neighbour," and the command to every man to love, as such, his fellows of every race and clime.

How sublimely did Christ render this in the rebuke to the questioner, by the parable of the man robbed and abused, and to whom neither Priest nor Levite would give assistance; but

whom a Samaritan—such as the Gospel was ordained for, and whose race was at enmity with that of the man—took up and did all that he could to comfort and restore. This last man was "neighbour" to the unfortunate one; which means not that the others had not the same duty to perform, for they had, and their omission was a sin; but the Samaritan obeyed his duty, and thereby was a model whom Christ set before all men saying, "Go thou and do likewise."

Our duty to our neighbour is certainly a most serious and pressing matter. It exists with our existence, and must be proportionate to our ability and condition. We move amidst our fellows daily and hourly: they hear our discourse and see our actions. Our influence ceaselessly acts upon all sides either for good or evil. It is imperative, therefore, that we constantly bear in mind and conform to the great Scripture precept upon which we have dwelt: that it may be as "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our paths."

Acting under its direction in order to fulfil our duty towards our neighbour there must be,

A general circumspectness in our words and deeds.

A word in season may do more than the

preaching of a life time; and a graceful action may recal a wanderer to the path of virtue, whom harsh rebuke would only make more stubborn. Whilst on the other hand a thoughtless word may confirm a wayward character: a hasty deed will destroy in a moment the respect gained by a whole life of virtue—aye, and even worse. There are times again when we cannot too strongly reprove the front of darkened vice; for such conditions there are that can only be overcome by denunciation and reprehension.

Bearing constantly before us the solemn duty we have to perform will show us better than any oral or verbal rules how to act on those connected by relationship or other circumstances, and those too whom we occasionally meet,—for it is often the first moments of intercourse in which the most striking impressions can be made and respect won; the after course depends much on the influence then exercised, and such moments being lost may never have their like again.

The tenor of our life must also be marked by *Disinterestedness.*

Without this quality we are unfitted for any good. Pretensions here are insufficient, they arouse suspicion rather than win confidence. We

must bear it in our manner. In a word it must be a characteristic. Were men imbued with this feeling what a change would come over the troubled world. Halcyon! peace would brood over mankind as stillness on the waters calmed by the Saviour's voice. But, as it is, each man viewing the continual panorama of chichanery and fraud unfolded around him, suspects the interestedness of his fellow to overreach, meets him with reserve and offensive arms of craft; striving to outdo lest he be outdone; and thus *suspicion* comes with its endless train of cunning and crime.

It is related of a member of the Society of Friends dwelling in North America, that when the Indians ravaged the district where he resided, although he hourly expected them to visit his house with burning brand and murderous tomahawk, he and his family went to bed leaving the door unbarred. At the dead of night the wild war-cry awoke them. They heard a body of Indians rush to the door, which yielded to the touch of a finger. The fierce band entered the kitchen, and then there was a sudden hush. The family heard the sound of stealthy feet retiring; and all was as quiet as before. When the morning rose they found that no violence had been done, nor an article

removed. These were the only *whites* spared at that place. In after years the Quaker learnt that his unlocked door saved all. This mark of disinterested confidence woke the nature that slumbered in the savage breast and proved more powerful than sword or rifle. Such is the influence that this virtue can exert, and in ordinary life it always brings respect to the possessor and obtains for him an attention from the erring when otherwise there would be a deaf ear turned to him.

The man who fulfils his duty to his neighbour will not be wanting in

Proper humility and suitable behaviour.

These relate both to men and circumstances. There are those persons towards whom we have to demean ourselves gracefully from their social position or the high nature of their profession. It is on the very nature of stability and good order that propriety be observed in every class both commanding and subordinate. Those who would propose the debasing mixture of all grades and destroy the pleasing ceremonials of respect prepare only for convulsion and disaster. To attach the names of *slavishness*, to a reverential demeanour, and *tyranny* to a dignified behaviour, is to falsify noble conditions and undermine the prop and strength of society.

Whilst, at the same time, where reverence and dignity are displaced by a crouching obsequiousness and despotic overbearing, neither the spirit of duty is alive nor the happiness that co-exists with its fulfilment. Duty tells a man that whether high or low there is a conduct proper to his place. It gives not the manners of a servant to his master; nor those of a master to the servant; it distinguishes between the spiritual teacher and the lay hearer, and makes all the orders of social community move harmoniously.

There must also be a fitness of our conduct to circumstances. We must "rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep," provided indeed, that such expressions are appropriate to the occasion. On an auspicious event and a pleasing success we may make happy; but on calamity and misfortune our deportment must be solemn and our minds resigned to the Great Disposer of events. A mind rightly trained and making its duty a task will not fail to know how to demean itself under the various circumstances of life. It will feel how valuable the words of the preacher "there is a time for all things." Inappropriate behaviour and proudness of spirit it will know to be at variance with the teachings of Scripture.

Nor will it dare to trifle with the name of *Him*, under whose inspiration they were penned. Woe unto that man who so impiously indulges his wanton tongue. He may be known as one neither to be honoured nor trusted. Consider if such be his bearing towards the beneficent Being to whom he owes life and its blessing, and whom he knows to be *all-seeing*, what confidence can we rest on his conduct to those who are but his equals? A grand example we have of the humility with which man should honour his *Maker* in the philosophic Newton, whose mighty genius taught the great lesson of lowliliness. It is recorded of him that whenever he mentioned the name of *God* he raised his hat in obeisance. What a lesson to those miserable puling sophists who presume to call themselves infidels and sneer at the existence of anything higher than themselves.

Duty to our neighbour also enjoins us to practise the virtue of

Charity.

The word must be taken in its full scriptural meaning. And it is grievous to see that its exposition is as necessary to-day as in the days of St. Paul. One part of mankind with selfish activity, and another with placid indifference, are continually at war with it; whilst, again,

its name is usurped by those who vain-gloriously give a trifle from their profuse fortunes to assist the efforts of others to alleviate misery.

Now charity must be a rule of life. To be anything at all, it must be that. St. Paul addressed himself to the hypocrisies and fallacies of eighteen and a-half centuries at least, when he declared that though he spoke with the tongues of men and angels: though he had "the gift of prophecy, and understood all mysteries and all knowledge," and though he had all faith so that he could remove mountains, and had not charity, he was nothing. "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." All these things that Paul enumerates are of value in their proper place, but by themselves, and wanting charity, they are snares and delusions. How far is this the case to-day? Is there not too much reason to complain with the poet—

"Alas, for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun."

How wonderful, yet how painful, it is to contemplate that *man*, who alone is fitted in creation to dispense and appreciate the blessing,

should so far confine and suppress it from all "its sweet uses!" The great doctrine of the Christian religion must be preached afresh:— "The end of the commandments is charity, out of a pure heart and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." This must quicken the soul. It must be the breath of life to our duty, which it will incite to every possible endeavour to alleviate man's sufferings irrespective of his clime, his race, his condition, or his opinions. It will make us look with a compassionate eye on his failings and sympathize with his misfortunes. By it we shall learn to check his wanderings with a firm but tender voice, and strive ever to disseminate the instruction of God and His word, to lighten the darkness of the ignorant, and bring the sunshine of hope unto the night of despair.

It is an essential part of our duty that we shall

Improve the talents that we have.

All good action is commensurate with the abilities of the individual, and in proportion as a man developes his powers is he enabled to assist his fellow-man. Assistance springs from many sources. It may be in counsel; it may be in worldly aid; it may be in physical support; and it must be from the condition of the man

that his capacity of succour comes. Care of one's own health in the third instance, industry in our own affairs in the second, and discipline of the mind in the first (on which everything and all depends in the primary degree, how much soever it rests on other things in the secondary), make us more competent to aid our fellows than a course the reverse of this.

As in everything great that has been accomplished by man, all rests on his own cultivation and development, so is it in his duty towards his neighbour. If he shall by application more fully know the heavens, or explore the earth, or master art and science, much more shall he also by application to the performance of his duty, do it better. Greatly important as this point is, we need not prolong upon it. Scripture teems with exhortations respecting it, and the whole was placed as in a glass before us by Christ, in His parable of the talents, wherein he who most improved what was allotted to him was considered the most worthy, but he who buried his share in obscurity was condemned. A promise and a warning never to be forgotten.

Our duty further requires us

To be always vigilant.

A great orator pronounced before the Privy Council of England that "it is the common fate

of the indolent to see their rights become a prey to the active. The condition upon which God has given liberty to man is eternal vigilance, which condition if he break, servitude is at once the consequence of his crime and the punishment of his guilt." The truth of these words is confirmed by history both sacred and profane. It behoves us, therefore, to be ever watchful, not only as necessary to secure that which we naturally possess, but to guard ourselves against those who would delude us from our duty, and to save ourselves from the numerous snares of temptation that beset us. Watch and pray that we enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is strong, but the flesh is weak."

We have to be vigilant, also, that we may take advantage of times and circumstances to fulfil our ceaseless round of duty. For these shall be our friends if we but use them, whilst they become our worst enemies if we neglect them.

We must be wary too that our feet slip not after the practice of many, who, under the pretence of a pious repugnance to the conduct of their fellows, behave towards them with an intolerance and uncharitableness unworthy of the religion they profess. These are wolves in sheep's clothing, which do more mischief by

their insidious wickedness than the most dangerous foe. And yet they gloss their conduct over with so many plausibilities that we require to take great heed lest we find ourselves almost unconsciously conniving at, and even adopting their deeds.

It is only the wakeful eye that can see the many perils that surround us, and the vigilant mind that shall enable us to evade and resist them. It is only the wakeful eye that can discern where and by what means most good can be done, and it is only the vigilant mind that can accomplish it. How many vain regrets does every man pour over neglected hours, over heedless dalliance with temptation, and over unappreciated circumstances! But woe unto those who waste every hour, who are heedless of all circumstances, and make themselves the sport and victim of every occasion. "What I say unto you I say unto all, *watch!*"

In fulfilling our duty, we will take special care

To employ our influence, our position, and our means as they may be most useful.

The aim of all we do is the production of happiness, and what happiness is real or lasting but that which is based on good? Wealth, position, and influence, are great instruments wherewith to achieve what we desire; but at the same time

their abuse for selfish or foolish ends produces inconceivable misery. They are indeed only a blessing when we use them properly in our duty to our neighbour. It is impossible for us to show the particular ways in which individuals shall employ those great powers; *that* they best know themselves, and not knowing the ignorance itself is wrong. We can simply point out their great beneficence when used for the end for which they were given, and the heavy responsibility that lies on each man according to the measure in which he possesses them. Like the gift of life itself, they have to be constantly and wholly employed in our great task. When in the declining days of Rome a certain procession took place at Byzantium, in honour of the victorious Belisarius, it is recorded that the eyes of the spectators were drawn from the gorgeous exhibition, enriched by the vast and luxurious spoils of nations, and which formed a scene unparalleled before in the magnificent capital, to the lonely figure of the captive Vandal King, who, still wearing the sumptuous insignia of royalty, and retaining in his demeanour the majesty of a sovereign, marched slowly along, pronouncing the words of Solomon, "Vanity! vanity! all is vanity!"

In this simple incident we see pourtrayed the

fate which is reserved for those who misapply their means, their influence, and their position, to frivolous and unworthy purposes. No greetings, or honour, or praise shall attend on such, but the solemn censure of the good and just. The epitaph upon their course can only be that drear and crushing sentence, "Vanity, vanity; all is vanity!"

In closing this part of our subject, we must reiterate that with which we set out. Our end must be as our beginning. The whole of our duty must be done in a religious spirit—that is, in conformity with the teachings of Scripture. What they inculcate has to be considered pre-eminent. They, in fact, teach us everything.

They will imbue us with the feeling not to injure our neighbour, but to strive for his comfort and salvation.

They will subdue in us all the evil that is in rebellion to truth and justice.

They will teach us not to speak with a malicious, slanderous, dissembling, or lying tongue, but to pronounce straightforwardly that which is honest and good.

Not to be heedless or reckless in our life, but of temperate and of prudent habits.

Not to be niggardly and covetous, but of a generous and open disposition.

The cause of God has suffered much by misrepresentations and misapprehensions that have gone abroad in consequence of the actions of many professors of His sacred religion being at variance with the teachings of the Scriptures themselves. But the dread responsibility of such a difference rests with the professors themselves, and not with the Holy Book. It is sufficient for us to know that what the fairest disciple has become, so may all become, even the meanest in position; and we have to strive in our own persons to wipe off this stain on the heavenly cause by exhibiting in word and deed how ennobling and beneficent it is which brings us to look upon Christ as our great

Example.

In Him we see to what excellence human nature can be brought by obeying the dictates of a holy and religious duty. He was a man like one of ourselves. "He was in all points tempted like as we are," and the power of the new dispensation resides greatly in the fact that He was subjected to all the weaknesses of our nature, and that by the force of virtue alone He repelled every attack of oppression and seduction. He is a model to which we have to conform. For here *is* a being who passed through the trials of life, yet was with-

out spot and blameless." No man can now complain that the precepts of Scripture are incompatible with human frailty; and that it is impossible to embody them in practice. In Christ we see them obeyed and exalting life.

We must then make Christ our study. His career was one incessant labour of duty to His fellows. See how He met and confuted the teachers of a cold religion of works; how He cured the diseased and the maimed that they might more fully enjoy their existence and glorify heaven in the enjoyment: how He called the putrescence of death into blooming vitality to cheer the widows and the sisters heart and extol His religion: how He called the lowliest of the earth to be His ministers: how He purified the sinner from his sin and sent him on his way rejoicing. Observe too His conversations, what models of eloquence and wisdom: there is not one frivolous or unappropriate word: the exhortation, the counsel, the denunciation, are beautifully adapted to each particular occasion. He bound, as it were, example and precept in one, and thus became the very star of human perfection. We must, therefore, keep our eyes fixed on Him. We may not, it is true, arrive at His supreme excellence, but thus much is certain, that it is incumbent

upon us to constantly emulate it, and by our endeavours we shall uplift ourselves. The prayer of the poet

"What in me is dark
Illumine; what is low, raise and support,"

will be answered, and we shall more completely accomplish our duty to our neighbour, ourselves, and our God.

Christ's example teaches us that there must be

No evasion of our task.—That we cannot slip from society and live alone. In so doing we act in variance to the designs of our Maker. We are in the world and of it. To refuse to take our apportioned part is a crime; which has the further evil too of being a bad example. We can only do our duty by following the steps of our Saviour, whose aim was the benefit of mankind, and who constantly mixed amongst them, except in those moments of communion with his Father, when the oppression of the wicked pressed hard and nothing earthly could furnish consolation, or support. And in this too we must make Him our great pattern, by seeking God in

Prayer.

The illumination of the Most High is the soul and inspiring genius of virtue, and this can

only be had by prayer. This holy act is the placing ourselves under the tuition of God for spiritual training, and as we most closely approach Him the better qualified will we be for our duty. Properly undertaken and the answering benedictions used to the best advantage we shall always be in a condition fit for our great work. But there must be no indifference or sluggishness. God will not attend to lip-service. Nay, He regards it as the worst hypocrisy. For the man who utters the formula of a prayer in devotional prostration without his spirit partaking in it is aware what he ought to do, and degrades the worship of Jehovah to empty show. He braves the throne of heaven with impudent audacity.

Prayer must be undertaken in the proper spirit of love, dependence, and determination to fitly employ the blessing which it calls down. Prayer is not a thing of times and seasons, even as duty is not a thing of times and seasons. We must let all things have our prayer. When the clouds are round us we must pray. When the sun shines on our path we must pray. In labour we must pray, and in rest we must pray. For ourselves we are not sufficient to withstand the seductions of success, nor the onset of persecution; but by prayer we shall be all-suffi-

cient. "The prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Christ's example too teaches us

Not to succumb to adversity.

"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." Such was the meekness of Him who conquered death and Satan.

Adversity has not to be thoughtlessly inveighed against. It is the discipline of the soul, which, without it, would be effeminate and inert. When great calamities fall upon mankind, we see how they at once call its ingenuity into play to discover the fatal causes, and prevent their recurrence; and even in those examinations many other useful discoveries are made. So when the individual is visited by adversity he is thrown back upon himself, and made to undergo rigid scrutiny, which results in self-purification and a better knowledge of the heart and ways, both human and divine. We must not break down under oppressions, but submit to them with manly resignation, and in the dark hours look to Him from whence all strength cometh. Though we may be crushed so low as even, with our Saviour, to exclaim,

"Oh, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," we must, like Him, hold on the great hope in the midst of agony, and add, "nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt," and we shall emerge from it wiser and better men.

"Yea, even that which mischief meant most harm, shall in the happy trial prove most glory."

An illustration was once most happily taken from nature by a depressed Christian, and is given in these words:—"Mr. Cecil suffered many reproaches from his profligate fellow-students, and many secret conflicts in his own mind. One day, while walking in the garden, he observed a fine pomegranate-tree cut almost through the stem to the root. On inquiring of the gardener the reason of this, he replied, 'This tree used to shoot so strong that it bore nothing but leaves, but when I had cut it in this manner, it began to bear plenty of fruit.' This he instantly applied to his own case, and derived much consolation." This incident is intructive to every one, for how much of the good that has been done by man is due solely to the cares and depressions he has been subjected to by Him who knows our every unfruitful desire and inclination.

In all things let us make Christ our example—

of perseverance, of humility, of truthfulness, of fearlessness, of singleness of purpose, of simplicity of heart,—and in whatsoever we do, "do all to the glory of God," so that if we cannot equal the Divine character which is set before us, at least we may deserve His love for our devotion, and also the love of His and our good Father Himself.

The annals of our own country give us many minor precedents of what good men may do who make it their endeavour to fulfil their duty to fellow-man. We have that fair flower of philanthrophy, John Howard, the Reformers and martyrs of the Christian Church, the champions of the abolition of the slave trade, a Clarkson, a Granvill Sharpe and a Wilberforce, yet these are but units amidst thousands. In fact, all great changes, religious and otherwise, have their origin in the minds of *individuals*,—who first influence their neighbours, they in turn influencing others. We are taught on every hand that we can accomplish mighty things if we but follow with all our soul, and mind, and strength the sacred command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Failure or success has not, however, to be taken into consideration. We must do our duty *because it is our duty*; and it is not till

men so accept it, and labour in it, imbued with the pious spirit breathed from the pages of Scripture, that the Church of Christ can extend from the Christian family to the community,—thence to the nation, and lastly embrace the whole earth, making every habitation a sacred tabernacle, and all the human family one vast Church of God,—an end for which we must strive continually.

And yet man is not without a constant blessing who fulfils the call of duty to his neighbour, and labours for this glorious consummation. Hope beams for ever o'er his path "as sunshine in a shady place." All actions and circumstances of life are made holier; his knowledge becomes plainer; his desires loftier; his talents strengthened and developed, and his intentions more firm. Duty is a fire that gives vital life to his powers; a pinion that lifts him high above the inconvenience and sordid conditions of the world; an omnipotence that scorns all obstacles and defies all violence; and an impulse that moves him forward in a beneficent course, which though it may lead even to the stake, leads also to heaven. Look at mankind in their innumerable pursuits; toiling and suffering from day to day, from year to year; sacrificing here, and hoarding up there. Now retiring to calm se-

questration, now madly running the giddy circle of dissipation; and what is their object? It is only that, and no more which the Christian fulfilling his duty bears in breast—*Happiness!* Unallied to care, exalted above the tumult,—*happiness* is his natural inheritance, a treasure which the world neither giveth nor taketh away, The full transcendent measure of which he reaches after his good fight is over, in the abodes of the blest with His Father and His angels.

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ESSAY VI.

All who have examined with any degree of reverent attention our Saviour's history, must have been struck with admiration at the attractive and impressive manner in which he conversed with mankind on subjects of the highest interest. "Truly never man spake like this man," was the testimony of those who listened to the gracious words that proceeded out of his lips. The incidents of ordinary life, and the objects by which he was surrounded, supplied him with illustrations. He had a word in season for every hearer; an admonition, a warning or an incentive, exactly suited to the specialities of each case. The lilies of the field, the sun shining in his strength, the wheat whitening unto harvest, the earth beneath and the sky above, the diversified arrangements of Providence, all furnished subjects of serious and appropriate instruction In the house and by the way, attended by his disciples, or holding converse with the multitudes who came from every quarter, the Saviour never failed to utter something worthy of their meditation and reflection.

It is the sublime and simple record of the Saviour's life. "He went about doing good." Words which may be regarded as the noblest

monument that the Eternal Spirit has reared to commemorate the Divine goodness and mercy, exhibited in that life where the Divine glory was veiled in the frail covering of human flesh. This record may not attract the admiring gaze of the world—of those who have been accustomed to admire outward greatness and glory—high sounding titles, pageantry and pomp; no! for such, the simplicity, purity, humility, ever-active, and ever-diffusive benevolence of Jesus may have few charms; but where can the world produce from the monuments it has reared, one inscription that will bear comparison, in sublimity, with the words, "He went about doing good."

If an artist feels his soul inspired, cheered, and sustained by the motives which his own genius and the art he worships supply, with what deeper, all-absorbing interest, yea, with what Divine gladness which nothing in mortal experience can equal, must Christ have begun and carried on his life-work, not of delineating the human form on the glowing canvas, but the work of bringing back a lost, alien world to peace, and of producing the Divine life and the Divine image in the soul of man! This was a work worthy of Christ, not a creation of genius, but of goodness; a new, a living, a Divine life in the soul, which was dark and dead, and sunk in trespasses and sins, grieved as He must have been with the many various elements of evil that constantly bowed him down in sorrow, yet with what generous alacrity, with what fervent affection, did he prosecute his work of doing good! And he

did so, not only because the God of love has associated happy feelings with the consciousness of doing good, but because his nature, his element, his intensest desire was to do good to the bodies and the souls of men. But amid all his griefs, and whose sorrows were like unto His sorrows? there must have been intervals of joy on high, and holy satisfaction, when the blind received their sight, the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed, the deaf were made to hear, the dead were raised up, when the poor became rich in faith and heirs of the promises.

All were welcome to share in his sympathies and receive his healing. His benevolence was like the light of the sun, which falls with as much gladness upon the window of the poor man's dwelling, as upon the turrets of the lordly mansion, which spreads its radiance over the rippling stream, as well as over the broad river, and which loves to linger amid village homes, where there is little to disturb the uniform processes of social life. So did Jesus love to expatiate amongst the homes of the poor, and pour the riches of his grace around their humble dwellings; and like the stream that goes forth fertilising the land through which it flows, so the benevolence of Jesus, rising first in the village retreats of Galilee, went forth to carry its rich and varied blessings to town as well as village, and to city as well as town, and to lay these blessings at the feet of all nations and classes of men.

With undaunted resolution He went forward, though He was deserted by those on whom He conferred the most signal blessings, though the

Jewish rulers sent forth to apprehend Him, though the dark shadow of the traitor's presence followed Him, though His pure precepts and sublime doctrines were cavilled at, perverted, and misunderstood, His mission misinterpreted, His works of healing disbelieved, or in the spirit of reckless contempt traced to satanic agency, His reputation assailed, and the most opprobious epithets heaped upon Him. Notwithstanding all this, he continued with unabated ardour, and if possible, with increased solicitude and tenderness to bless, though in the effort He should be cursed; to heal, though he should be torn; to bind up though He should be broken; to save though he should be destroyed. He met hatred with love, and wrath with meekness, scorn with pity, and threatening with forbearance and peace. When on one occasion He was refused admittance into a village of the Samaritans, and though entreated by the beloved disciple to bring fire from heaven to consume them, He meekly replied, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." Even the garden of Gethsemane was not without its work of healing. Nor was this His last act of mercy in His career of love, for when He was suspended upon the cross, and when His feet could move no longer on errands of mercy, His tongue blessed those who reviled Him,—"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." And last, not least, the highest act of healing that marked His wondrous life was the saving of the penitent thief, at the eleventh hour, when after the sandglass of his sinful career was all but run out, he was

plucked as a brand from the burning. There is nothing in this world that may be compared to the Saviour's love. The deep, pure, strong love of a mother is proverbial. Yet even she may forget; but Christ, never; having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them unto the end."

"A sweet but solitary beam,
An emanation from above,
Glimmer's o'er life's uncertain dream,
We hail that beam and call it love!
But fainter than the pale star's ray
Before the noontide blaze of day,
And lighter than the viewless sand
Beneath the wave that sweeps the strand,
Is all of love that man can know,—
All that in angel's breast can glow,—
Compared, O Lord of Hosts! with thine,
Eternal—Fathomless—Divine!"

With what plainness and simplicity is the path of duty marked out to us in Scripture, so plainly that the "wayfaring man though a fool shall not err therein," and as if this was not sufficient and that nothing might be wanting which could serve either as a guide or a stimulus, Christ Himself has trodden this path, and left behind Him the print of His feet. Accordingly, when He would point out to His followers the path of duty, He says to them, "Learn of me;" when the Apostle Paul would exhort Christians to the cultivation of humility and other virtues, he says to them, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus:" when another apostle would exhort them to patience under suffering, he says "Hereunto

were ye called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that ye should follow His steps." The example of Jesus is exhibited as the best directory for our conduct, and the most powerful stimulus to diligence and perseverance in running the Christian race. Not only has He marked out, in His word and by His example, the path we are to pursue, but He imparts to us the aids of His grace, supplies us with all needful strength, and protects us from the numerous and powerful enemies by which we are surrounded, and before which we would otherwise fall.

What can be more explicit than the summary of the moral law, given by Christ—supreme love to God, and equal love to man. The second is as obligatory as the first; love to man, in all the varieties of its operations and manifestations for his comfort, is as essentially a part of religion as love to God. Read also the apostle's beautiful exposition of this precept:—"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." How explicit and minute also is the direction given in Phil. iv. 8: "Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. Think on these things." All these virtues relate to our conduct to our fellow-creatures; and because there are some things we owe them which can scarcely be classified under any of these particulars, the apostle puts in the general adjunct, whatsoever things are "lovely" and of "good report," as if he had said all that is or can be claimed on the ground of justice, honesty, truth, and purity; everything which is amiable, attractive, and

praiseworthy, let this be done by those who bear the name of Christ. To this I may add one more passage, than which nothing can be more imperative on a professor to let his religion shine out in everything—"Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Man's duty to his neighbour is summed up in these words: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt. xxii. 39); and, "Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. vii. 12). Our duty to our neighbour, as well as to God, is summed up in love, because all the particular branches of our duty will most naturally and easily flow from love to Him. A due temper of mind to our neighbour, as well as to God Himself, is necessary to our acceptance. If a real inward love to men could be separated from the proper outward effects, then that would by no means be sufficient. The pretence of love may be separated from the fruits of it, and that without doubt will fail of acceptance. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." Many proofs might be given of the narrowness of the Jewish love. They went so far as to deny the common offices of humanity, or at least not to think themselves obliged to show them to any but a brother Jew. It plainly appears in the prejudice which remained in Peter's mind, even after our Lord's ascension, against any converse with a devout Gentile, as Cornelius was, till God by immediate revelation cured him of his

bigotry. He spoke the common sense of his nation, when he tells Cornelius and his friends, "Ye know that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company or come unto one of another nation; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean."

Christianity hath given us more enlarged views; it teaches us to consider all men as near to us, and gives us many uniting views of them. It represents the natural relation and alliance which there is between all men, as such. The Gospel calls us back to contemplate the common original of our natures, that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth." So that we are to consider ourselves and others as all descended from one common father; not only from Adam, the father of our flesh, but as he was the son of God, we are all in common the offspring of our Father in heaven. When we look upon the meanest or even worst of men, we should make the reflection which Job did in reference to his servants, and for the sake of which he durst not despise them, "Did not He that made me in the womb make them? and did not one fashion us in the womb?" And this common Father is yet more eminently so, as He is the Father of spirits, as He has breathed into them and us living, reasonable, and immortal souls, which gives a dignity to man in the order of beings above the visible creation. "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Now this similitude of nature, especially of reasonable powers, is a just ground

of universal love. "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." "Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

Therefore all is comprehended in love, because genuine love will lay the most pleasing and powerful constraint upon us to perform the several particular duties which are required from us. A man that loves his neighbour will be stimulated on by that affection to do the very same things to him which God requires from him as an act of obedience; so that nothing will remain to turn his temper into obedience, but to direct his intention, and to perform the effects of love in obedience to God, which he is strongly excited to by his own loving disposition.

Love hath a language all its own,
  A felt, though voiceless eloquence;
It speaketh in a look—a tone,
  A deed of frank beneficence.
The savage knows it in his wild,
  It hath a speech for monarchs fit;
It soothes the old, it wooes the child.
  The lettered sage confesseth it.
In every climate understood,
  In tent and temple, hut and hall;
Great are the wise—greater the good;
  Greatest who loveth most of all.

Justice and beneficence, or charity, comprehend all our duties to our neighbour, and sincere love will effectually prompt us to both. The distinct offices of justice are, indeed, somewhat various, as mens' conditions and characters differ: but the general obligations, and the

general rules are one and the same; which may easily be reduced to that admirable maxim of our blessed Saviour, the compendium and substance of all equity—"Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." Doth the great God, who is infinitely above us, and can never be capable of needing anything from us, readily give to mankind whatever they can reasonably expect from a kind and loving father? And is there not much more reason that we should deal so with another? If we are obliged to be followers of God as dear children, we should readily afford others, after that bright and disinterested Pattern, all needful aid, which they may desire of us, as a matter of equity, humanity, or charity. This duty to our neighbour may be proposed as a necessary term of God's hearing our requests. Such is the benignity of His nature, that He is ever ready to hear us; but He has fixed a constitution, which gives no foundation to hope that He will graciously answer our prayer, if we are unjust or uncharitable to our neighbours. Declarations to this purpose are very express in Scripture—"When ye spread forth your hands I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." "Come now let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow." "Then shalt thou call, and the Lord

shall answer; thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I am; if thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity, and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul."

The virtue of justice is not only the main pillar and strength of societies, but as it were the essential and vital spirit by which they subsist; and that the contrary vices, viz., censoriousness, detraction, slander, undermining arts, rigorous oppression, and injuries of every kind, are directly calculated to dissolve the frame of all governments, to render a regular social life absolutely impossible, and the human life itself insupportable. If we love our neighbour as we love ourselves, it will dispose us to the performance of all good offices. It will be a law of kindness, not only make us harmless and blameless, but studious to do good, and treat all as persons we love. Charity hath all these excellent properties assigned to it which we find in I. Cor. xiii.

Charity, according to the derivation of the term, and in its primary signification, denotes that state of mind in which an object is dear to us; but being appropriated to a moral use, it signifies only the affection of mind to mind; which in our present being, is confined to the intercourse of man with his fellow-creature and with his Creator.

Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble; he is the child of pain and sorrow, that he might be continually invited to charity; that self-feeling and fellow-feeling

might make his soul kindred to love, tie close to his heart the bond of society, and prepare him for that society above, where love is triumphant. Look upon the few, the very few, who know not the suffering of body or of mind which are the general lot of humanity; and then say, whether God be not wise in ordering to most of us, our share in the calamities of this world. Suffering is the school of compassion; ease, prosperity, and the ignorance of pain, have nothing of this benevolent influence; they rather disgust to the sight of misery; they blunt the natural sympathy of man, and often harden the heart; while, to have felt ourselves, to have tasted the joy of condolence and relief, opens all the fountains of goodwill in us. Then is the house of mourning known to be better than the house of feasting: oh! with what power does the mourner speak to him who has been a fellow-sufferer; how does it tune his soul to virtue, lift him above the world and all itsselfish policies, and carry his view forward to that better world where God shall smile on his good deeds, and reward him in the very way of charity, by enlarging the field of its exercise, and giving him to minister to the evil and distress of worlds; charity is goodness directed by sympathy; she enters into every fellow-mind, and she supposes that every fellow enters into hers, and therefore is disposed to be and to do to all what she could wish, in the same circumstances, that others should be and do to her.

"To err is human, to forgive divine." The heart which is once opened to forgive, cannot be

shut immediately; a whole train of noble and generous feelings, which only wanted an open door, rush in and take possession of it; and these cannot be excluded in one day, let us try all that we can. The little rill becomes a river, and the river a gushing tide, fertilizing dreary souls as it sweeps along. Forgiveness may not always be like mercy, "twice blessed," it may bless the forgiver only and not the forgiven. The charity, which arises from a spirit of forgiveness, and the love engendered by the cultivation of kindly feelings, is so contagious in its influence, and so pleasing in its results, that the man who would refuse to respond to them, must be looked upon as a churl of no common magnitude, the man who has not cherished the Divine temper of charity in his breast, and exercised himself in the varied duties of it, has no foundation for the hopes of heaven; that charity is the wedding garment, which marks the master and the household to which we belong, and without which the gates of paradise will be shut upon us.

To others let me always give,
What I from others would receive;
Good deeds for evil ones return,
Nor when provoked with anger burn.
This will proclaim how bright and fair
The precepts of the Gospel are;
And God himself, the God of love,
His own resemblance will approve.

Considering man as a being endowed with affection, it is religion, and religion alone, which furnishes proper objects of desire and love,

giving these principles a right direction, and wisely regulating them in all their operations. It opens up to his view everything that is truly great, and good, and excellent, that deserves esteem, or can excite love. It calls forth into active and delightful exercise, gratitude, and hope, and joy, and every worthy and pleasing emotion.

One matter which religion claims to regulate, but from which it is excluded by many, is our temper. Nothing can fit us for heaven but love; the very essence of religion is love to God for our own sake, and to man for God's sake. O how much dishonour is done to religion by the bad temper of its professors; by the petulance and peevishness of one, the passion of a second, the sullenness of a third, the obstinacy of a fourth, and the cherished resentment of a fifth. I am aware that there is something physical in the cause of bad tempers, but still they are subject to moral control. Some may find it more difficult to manage their temper than others, and some who take more pains than those who are possessed of a natural amiableness, make far less progress than the latter. The mischief and the blame lie in supposing that as bad tempers are inherent in us, their indulgence is inevitable, and therefore excusable. If this be correct, all sin is inevitable and excusable, for it is all inherent. If, then, you would prove your regeneration—if you would carry on the work of sanctification—if you would not have darkness of mind, and distress of conscience—if you would not grieve your fellow-Christians, and disturb those around

you, subdue and regulate your temper; your profession requires, a constant resistance of such dispositions, and it is one great part of religion to keep up this resistance.

The duty of prayer for others derives as high a sanction from the Word of God as prayer for personal blessings; its performance is most solemnly urged, its results are most amply unfolded, and its examples shine with brightest lustre, and cast a glory around the mediatorial throne. To pray for our own prosperity is altogether a necessary duty; and yet if we eye it with a strict attention, we shall find it no more than a lawful and pious selfishness. But to pray as heartily for our enemy as we do for our own daily bread, and to esteem his felicity equal with our own necessities, even at the very instant when he is treating us with the greatest cruelty, we then imitate that Divine model of perfection, who, in the midst of the most barbarous usage, and in the very agonies of death, offered up this most affectionate prayer and apology for his very murderers, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." This is the perfection of Christian love.

Of what importance to the whole of religion and goodness is self-acquaintance and reflection? Our obligations to God Himself, presuppose a knowledge of the natures He has given us, as the foundation in which they are laid. And, so we see, do all our duties to our fellow-creatures. If we were more conversant at home, that would be our best preparation for all the duties we owe to other beings without

us, either to our Creator or to our fellow-creatures.

Let us therefore earnestly pary to God that He will write this law in our hearts, and that He will keep it for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of our heart. And let us endeavour to have it ever present and ready for use, that it may be a "lamp to our feet, and a light to our paths."

How pleasant will our reflections be, when conscience can bear us this testimony? When other men violate this rule in their behaviour to us, it will be a refreshing support to be conscious that we have not deserved it by an unrighteous conduct to them. We may look up with the greater freedom and confidence to God; and in this, as in all other applications to Him, have the firmer hope of a gracious answer, when this is the temper of our minds. Yea, it will be a happy presage of our arrival at last in the blessed world, where all the holy inhabitants are fully of this temper, and act eternally with uninterrupted harmony and concert one towards another.

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ESSAY VII.

DUTY has been defined to mean, "Whatever we are bound by nature, reason, or law to perform. Admitting the general accuracy of such a definition, no one of ordinary thought or perception can be altogether ignorant of his duty. All have their duties; and as good citizens and members of society they are expected to perform them, whether as masters or as servants.

Man, as a social, moral, intelligent, and accountable creature, has higher motives on which to form his judgment of duty, than what simply arises from nature and reason, law, contract or agreement; and in proportion as he exercises his faculties, and progresses in intellectual and Scriptural knowledge, he will make increasing discoveries of his duties. The highest exercise of duty is that which man owes to his Creator; surely then, when God has placed man's duty to his neighbour immediately in conjunction with his duty to himself, it must clothe it with a power and responsibility that cannot be neglected with impunity. By the phrase "neighbour," as usually employed, we understand one who lives near another, or by neighbourhood, the people adjoining; to this strict sense we cannot limit nor discuss this duty; although it may be consistent to give them, as the first in order, a preferential consideration. Notwithstanding, there

are duties to our neighbour, which may properly bear only local application, and which demand first and earliest attention. Therefore, in considering man's duty to his neighbour, we will take the highest and safest ground for motive in action, for success in prosecution, and for reward in completion. The first grand principle on which it is to be based, is commanded by God, reiterated and interspersed through all the writings of Moses and the prophets, and holy men of old, and a few confirmed by Jesus Christ and His apostles. "Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; this is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." James says, "If ye fulfil the royal law, according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well," and, at the completion of Christ's memorable sermon on the mount, after giving directions how men should exercise charity, towards each other, "he adds, "*Therefore, all things whatsoever* ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." The one is a counterpart of the other in spirit and design. The principal of love is intense in its ardour and mighty in its operation; when pure and tried, it will influence man or woman to submit to much, to suffer much, and nerve them with power to be courageous to attempt and accomplish much.

Taken in connection with the whole Gospel scheme, it may be justly considered revently, the most powerful argument that God could advance in enforcing man's duty towards his neighbour. Think of the import of the words, and of what resulted from the wonderful transaction, and then of God simply asking man to carry out the spirit of his manifestation of grace, and then of duty. "God *so loved* the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Man must evidence this love to his neighbour by his actions, and not professions, it must be in lively and constant exercise in his heart. It is not we apprehend meant to be that kind of love which mere natural instinct prompts, nor that paternal or fraternal love, which is expected and ought to subsist between families, and where the mutual obligations are more closely knit by consanguinity. It is however, if rightly perceived and felt, of sufficient strength to impel man to do what is right, and cherish a spirit of kindness and good will towards his neighbour, and to evince that he feels it a pleasure as well as a duty to do him good. We do not mean those who have no Christian principle to guide them, who act merely from a common impulse of feeling, as a member of society; but such as with higher motives and nobler aspirations, and desirous of developing more truly, a character conformable to the will of God, and the example of Jesus Christ; *in* all duty that regards man's temporal or spiritual condition.

In the law given by Moses, there are a great

number of distinct rules laid down as laws, beyond what are contained in the Decalogue, which were especially framed for the people of that *age*. Some of these have been abrogated, and such retained as are suitable and adapted for all people in all times, and expressly commanded by God, or sanctioned in both the Old or New Scriptures. The categorical laws for man's observance towards his neighbour are comprised in a small compass, indeed the whole moral law can be easily committed to memory; but it requires a lifetime to study, learn, inwardly digest and practically to obey them; much more is comprehended in all of them, as in every, injunction of Scripture, than is at first sight apprehended. The moral law states in connection with duties to our neighbour that "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates," "Honour thy father and thy mother," "Thou shalt not kill," "Thou shalt not commit adultery," "Thou shalt not steal," "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's." All these righteous and seasonable laws are abstractly easily understood; and furnish thought for expansion and amplification on the discharge of duty, in a variety of forms, and are illustrated and enforced throughout the whole of the sacred pages of Scripture. Christian love, or charity admits of diffusive inter-

pretation, and (we think), in the sense in which it is employed in the great commandment, we will be justified in giving it unlimited latitude, so far as we keep within the bounds of reason and Scriptural truth. If we diverge a little from the sacred to the social or civil question, we assume that man's duty to his neighbour is embodied in these. Cordiality, good feeling, mutual sympathy, good advice, chaste and profitable conversation, social acts of friendship and kindness, are the common place duties which neighbour owes to neighbour. We venture also to affiirm it to be a duty, however painful, for every well-disposed mind to oppose any contrary, unruly, or bad feeling, or principle that may be lurking in the ungenerous breast of the common disturber of the peace of a neighbourhood, that by prudent and wholesome reproof, the defaulter may be, if possible, reclaimed. Of the value of peace amongst neighbours we need not dilate. Man cannot but feel it an honour to be instrumental in maintaining peace, especially when he remembers the encouraging and matchless words of Christ: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." There is another essential trait of feeling, without which man cannot exemplify the spirit of love commanded, and that is, to have a *heart* right towards his neighbour, a real and sincere wish for his welfare, devoid of all ill-will or grudge. "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice." He must also exercise meekness and humility, patience and forbearance, benevolence

and compassion, magnanimity, justice, kindness, gentleness, and forgiveness. Without these, what would avail the lighter but still commendable qualifications of civil life? The apostle gives a fine summary of the elevating effects produced in the nature of man by the exercise of pure Christian charity. A common feeling prevails amongst a section of the lower class, that their wealthier or well-to-do neighbours do not respect them or notice them as they ought to do. It is unfortunate when this is the case, because it creates a similar inclination to show an independent and haughty spirit on their part, which it would be far better to avoid, as the error of the one does not justify the retaliation of the other, and seldom accomplishes its purpose. Meekness and humility will sooner attract and soften the asperities of even a callous heart. At the same time, both would be chargeable with the same offence, *disrespect*. "Honour all men," is the apostolic injunction. It is man's duty, whatever be his station, to do this. We read that "God is no respecter of persons." Now, this we can understand in a certain sense, that all men, in His sight, as to their *actual condition*, are upon a level, simply as mortal and accountable men. "He hath made of one blood all men that dwell upon the face of the earth." The temporary distinctions that God's providence produces amongst men should not, nor will not by a right-thinking man, cause him to look down disdainfully or proudly upon his less fortunate and poor neighbour. As a man, the workmanship of the same Almighty hand, "fearfully and wonderfully made,"—ex-

quisite mechanism, incomprehensible skill in the combination of the machinery of his mortal frame,—he is entitled to be looked upon with respect, else his Maker is insulted. Again, mark, however varied man's condition here, we cannot trace the distinction beyond the surface of the earth. All are bound for the same immortal destiny; many will people the same heaven or the same hell, who stood *aloof* or *aghast* from each other on earth; or the same may be more strangely still reversed. Behold, your imaginative faculties may even now contemplate it. Two souls have left their tenements of clay, and are on the wing for eternity. As they sped their flight to the judgment-bar, what mighty microscope could assist human vision to distinguish between the soul of the prince and the soul of the beggar? We cannot ask the loftiest angel, but God's Word hath told us, the one "*lifted up his eyes in torments*," and the other "*was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom*." When man forfeits the respect of his neighbour by gross immorality, or more flagrant sinful conduct against all law, he merits punishment and deserves reproach; but no man with the fear of God in his heart, will dare to say of his neighbour, however miserable or downcast, one to whom terms of pardon are held out for acceptance, and for whom Jesus died—he is unworthy of notice, let him alone.

In the common affairs of life, in proportion as man considers his neighbour's comfort, and in case of need administers to his temporal necessities, and does all in his power to promote his happiness, he will gain esteem and confidence,

and be able to command considerable influence in furthering any good cause in his immediate locality. But let a man profess what he may, if he give no practical proof of his sincerity, he will be of small repute in his neighbourhood. It does not require a very acute perception to notice how the experimental working of deeds of benevolence and charity by Christian professors are scrutinized by an observing world. Where there is power and means at command, and no symptoms of any movement being made to do any good for those that are in poverty or trouble, or to further any scheme that has for its object the mitigation of human suffering and misery, that man must be one that neglects his duty to his neighbour. Kind offices of philanthropy, on the smallest scale, are all parts of duty due by one neighbour towards another, and opportunities for the discharge of them are constantly occurring in a variety of forms. At such seasons the humane, especially the Christian man, will render such service as the case may appear to require, by pecuniary aid, by words of comfort and consolation, that the sorrow of the mourner may be soothed, and the tears of the disconsolate and bereaved be dried up. It is a good and pleasing trait in the deportment, particularly in our rural population and in intelligent people generally, to find that trouble and distress of any kind awaken in them their tenderest sympathies, and that with ready hands and willing hearts they render their best services to their afflicted neighbour. It is a good thing to have a good neighbour and be in a good neighbourhood. How miserable and

pitiable must be their condition who, under suffering circumstances, obtain no commiseration. There are frequent calls for reciprocal acts of kindness, and calls for deeper expression of feeling and consolation may, and do often occur, when they are least expected. To be in the path of duty is to be in a state of preparation for any event that may happen. On this practical part of man's duty to his neighbour, the beloved disciple John writes unmistakeably: "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." Again, "If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be ye warmed and be ye filled, and notwithstanding give them not these things that are needful to the body, what doth it profit?" There are some men full of forms, professions, and ceremonies, who aim to perform some duty, which cost them little or nothing beyond the presentation of their persons. They may promise largely and talk loudly, and beyond this, little more is heard of them or their doings. They may profess to reverence the Commandments, and be influenced by the sayings and example of Christ; by their actions they show they are mere formal professors, but not actual doers of the word. Such do not their duty to their neighbour, and when the day of reckoning comes, they are found deficient. The Lord draws away the mask, and demolishes their ex-

cuses. His language is cutting, thrilling, and pointed. He represents Himself as the injured party, and they cannot escape the fatal charge. "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat. I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink. I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they answer him, saying, When saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." It is important to mark and understand the meaning of words, when they are spoken by one having authority, and who "spake as never man spake." "*One of the least*" is as dear to Christ as one of the greatest, and are to be as much (or in one sense *actually more*), if downcast and forsaken, the objects of Christian regard, and sympathy, and love, by His professing disciples, which, if manifested in the smallest degree, will not lose its reward, although it be but as "a cup of cold water."

Whatever provocation man may imagine he receives from a neighbour, he is prohibited from indulging in a revengeful spirit, but exhorted to cultivate a forgiving disposition; "To err is human, to forgive divine;" besides, he is taught by the great and infallible Teacher to pray, "that your Father which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses; but if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your tresspasses;" also the benediction of our Lord on the mount should

arrest a vindictive spirit; "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." Strict justice in all man's transactions with his neighbour is an indispensable duty; the smallest petty speculations or fraudulent transactions of any kind, are unquestionably included in the commandments, "Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another. Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour neither rob him; ye shall do no unrighteousnes in judgment, in meteyard, in weight or in measure; just balance, just weights, a just ephah, and a just bin shall ye have." *I am the Lord your God.*

Some men profess to believe a truth, but they give no evidence that they are convinced, or their conduct would show it; it seems to be difficult to convince people of the most obvious and generally admitted truths, especially if their own welfare depends upon acting on these truths; to believe is one thing, to be effectually convinced another.

We cannot escape with propriety without glancing at the more fearful crimes, which are involved in man's duty, and which cannot be contemplated without a shudder. "Thou shalt do no murder." The idea is sufficient to cause a thrill of horror to seize upon the soul. What the accusation of the guilty transgressor may be, cannot be imagined; but we may imagine its agony intensely increased, by the conscious cry of a voice more terrible than the loudest thunder, ever and anon sounding in crushing accents, "*What hast thou done?* the voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the ground."

In succession, is another foul act of deep enormity, "Thou shalt not commit adultery."—How often has this debasing sin led to the former, and brought misery, wretchedness and ruin in its train, caused broken-hearted and disgraced families, and deserted and desolated homes. Man's duty is, as far as practicable, to be the guardian of his neighbour's domestics, and see that no daring intruder be permitted to act indecently, if in their power to prevent it. The doom of these miscreant offenders is fearfully depicted, and such is the fitting anathema on the polluted votaries to artful seduction. "For without are dogs and sorcerers and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." There is another aspect, in which we may also properly view man's duty towards his neighbour. An enlightened and philanthrophic mind will easily admit that all the duty we have enumerated as positive and proper duties to a neighbour or neighbourhood, are also capable of application and extension to the whole brotherhood of man universally. Still, the idea may be entertained and cherished, that their own immediate neighbours and neighbourhood should be the special subjects of duty. This is right, and no doubt intended, but not to stop at that limited locality. Man is a moveable subject, so that there is a section of the human family ever on the march, and others frequently changing their habitations, thus constantly gaining access to fresh neighbours. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in his parabolical method of teaching, illustrates graphically man's duty, and who is

entitled to the name of neighbour, which in accordance to the scheme of his religion is applicable to all sorts and conditions of men, and shows its adaptation to suit the necessities of all throughout the world. He was often assailed and interrogated by the learned and public men of the cities he visited, not so much to elicit truth, as to entangle and confute him. On such occasions the Divine Saviour not only answered them to their astonishment, but dismay, and taught them some practicable lesson. No Scripture reader will not have read of a certain lawyer who stood up and tempted him, saying, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He answered him, "What is written in the law," (your own acknowledged law), "How readest thou?" The lawyer, accurately repeats the commandment, to which Jesus rejoins, "Thou hast answered right, this do, and ye shall live." But still willing to justify himself, the lawyer inquires, "And who is my neighbour?" mark, how extraordinarily the Saviour carries him away to contemplate an incident, that at once appeals to his judgment, his passions and his senses. "A certain man from Jerusalem going to Jericho was stopt by thieves, was stript, wounded and left for dead; a *priest* came that way and saw him, but passed by; another of the same order, a *Levite*, when he was at the place looked on him, and passed by; but a certain Samaritan (a man of inferior repute or calling to the other two), as he journeyed, came where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring

in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two-pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." To attempt to add anything to the Saviour's narrative would mar the story, and detract from its beauty, the overflowing soul, without utterance, may only dwell upon the benevolence of Jesus, as he closes the scene; how mild and admirable is his appeal, "Which now thinkest thou was neighbour to him that fell among the thieves?" And he (the lawyer) said, "He that shewed mercy on him;" then said Jesus to him, "Go, and do thou likewise." The application we leave to a feeling heart, and intelligent mind. It presents our neighbour in a new aspect, a neighbour not in name but in reality. It admonishes such as occupy high and sacred callings, to see to it, that they be not less mindful of duty than their humbler brethren, but act the part of the good Samaritan when called to look upon distress in any form. Wherever man is found, known or unknown, of whatever country or colour, if in need of help, from whatever cause, according to the doctrine of Jesus, the man that passes him by, without rendering him that help, is neither his neighbour or friend. Jesus, it is emphatically said, "went about doing good;" and His disciples, or followers, should follow the print of His footsteps, although it can only be at a humble distance. He however is *deputed*; it is his business to do what he can to

relieve the sufferings of our common humanity, to heal the wounds of the afflicted, dry the tear from the sorrowful eye, comfort the mourner, and infuse joy and consolation into the disconsolate and desponding soul. The opportunities for these manifestations of benevolence and love, are ever occurring in this sin-stricken and changing world. Wherever man may roam, he will find fitting objects for human sympathy and unlimited latitude for the most expanded exercise of Christian philanthrophy; whether at home or abroad, the edict of heaven remains unalterably the same, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." There is harmony, consistency and reasonableness in all that God requires of man, as duty towards his neighbour. No duty occupies an isolated position, it may be a distinct duty, but its performance will not excuse the omission of others of equal or greater import, one naturally leads to another; they are combined like links in a chain, not one of which can be detached without contraction or observation. For example, men pray for the pardon of their sins, and likewise for God to forgive their enemies, persecutors and slanderers; this would be insulting to the Almighty, and mockery, if they do not desire and strive to cease from sin, or if they retain any animosity or rancour in their heart towards those for whom they profess to pray. It is a man's serious duty to pray for his neighbour and all men, and to take a deep interest in all that concerns his soul's salvation; this is not a business which belongs exclusively to clergymen and ministers, but in which all the faithful

should co-operate for the advancement of Christ's kingdom on earth. What is essentially wanted is, for man individually to feel his own personal responsibility, and the importance of acting practically by precept and example, and having a consciousness that he possesses power to attract others by demonstrating a living faith, with a sober, righteous, and godly life. It is from such evidences, that the neighbour can infer, that they are the children of God, and look for conduct from them which they do not expect from the giddy world.

"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," or, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them, for this is the law and the prophets." God gave these, and submitted them to the *universal world*, and we take them to be the powerful principles, which through man's instrumentality and God's blessing it will be morally regenerated and saved. Every individual man should therefore study this important duty, and try to ascertain, if he is personally contributing to bring about a better state of things for society and the great community generally, that the complexion of the world may realize a great change, and ere long the jubilant song be sung in all lands, "Peace on earth and good will towards men." There is no such thing as neutral ground; every man must either advance or retard the progress of civilization and improvement, and his conscience must either acquit or condemn him as to the position he occupies, and at last if he continue to act an obstructive part, he will experience the bitterness of still greater condem-

nation. Man was made to serve God, his neighbour, and his country, and not his own selfish and grovelling purposes, and instead of being as he ought to be, a useful member of society, if he prefer simply to work, "eat, and drink, and be merry," and only look to himself, let the world go as it may, he may find for his pains, the gnawing cankerworm which will prey upon his vitals. In this country, from its advantages, privileges, and liberties (and especially its religious liberties), the facilities are great for man to be a sort of model example of duty to his neighbour. It stands proudly elevated amongst the nations, therefore Englishmen owe much to God for their position. We are told it was said by our gracious Queen to a distinguished foreigner, "*That we owed all our greatness to the Bible.*" May her subjects prove their true nobility, by submission to its precepts, and promote the prosperity of the nation by fulfilling the great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." In manifesting this, there should be no sectarian barrier to operate as a hinderance to the discharge of duty. The elevation of high Christian principle will surmount all petty distinctions; and the boundless flow of good feeling will be nurtured and matured by the apostolic admonition "Let the mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus," it will go out in copious streams throughout all the world, regardless of title or rank, of country or colour. The exercise of compassion and mercy will be wherever it is needed; of teaching where ignorance prevails, of enlightening where there is darkness, of imparting joy where there

is sorrow, of comforting the mourner and reviving "the heart of the humble and contrite ones," of inspiring life into such as are morally dead, and in the regions of the shadow of death, and of raising the immortal mind to contemplate the unfading glories and eternal happiness beyond death and the grave.

These are important parts of duty for man towards his neighbour in all places; and no considerations of an inferior kind which men are disposed to start as excuses, should be permitted to interfere to prevent the discharge of so momentous a duty as may involve the loss or salvation of an immortal soul. Think of that and then of commanded duty, and put the question, — whether ye should obey God, or yield to the suggestions of a diffident mind. Christian men should consider themselves in a subordinate sense, as missionaries to their more ignorant neighbours, and all with whom they come in contact who need counsel and instruction. No act they can perform for their spiritual need, is less a duty than what they can do for their temporal need; and although possibly the one may be more valued at the moment, the incomparable disparity will appear, when the understanding is open to eternal realities, and an everlasting condition contrasted to the fleeting shadow of an earthly existence. Man can, and may properly commence his work at home, even as Christ commissioned his disciples to begin at Jerusalem. Having a world for a parish, there need be no restriction to labour, he may in his travels through life, visit many a gloomy abode and wretched hovel, or

with the philanthropy of a Howard or a Fry, pay passing visits to a prison, and in a double sense "preach deliverance to the captives, and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound." Oh, that men were more impressible to their duty and the real interest of their race; in worldly things they are full of conception and perception, prone to lavish all their faculties on the empty and unsatisfactory pursuits of time and sense, instead of aspiring to the higher and soul-ennobling luxury of doing good. Was man studiously inclined, in every walk through life, he may see objects to admire which are calculated to remind him of duty, especially to his neighbour. All the bounties of Providence, are intended for man generally, and not individually for the great ones of the earth. For man all nature wears a smiling aspect; the sun sheds its lustre, the flowers their fragrance, the mountains and valleys and green fields, their invigorating air, and verdure, and fruit: and all living creatures enjoy its existence and perform their several functions with pleasurable delight (except goaded by inconsiderate man); and just because his eyes are daily familiar to the grandeur of the scenes of universal nature, he shuts his eyes and senses from contemplating, and drawing lessons of wisdom from them. The seasons as they roll on, and the sustaining power of the everlasting God, all combine to remind man of his duty. "While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease," "but man dieth and wasteth away," and soon

will be called to render his account for the deeds done in the body. Therefore he should be ever gathering fragments of knowledge, and learn lessons of duty to God, to his neighbour, and to himself. On the whole, our argument is intended to convey the idea, that man in the exercise and proper discharge of his duty to his neighbour, is to carry out God's wise and benevolent intentions, in all natural, reasonable, and revealed law, and scriptural enunciation of duty, in order to the social, moral, and spiritual improvement of mankind universally; and that his individual and humble agency is demanded, to forward those designs of his Creator, to be overruled by Himself for the accomplishment of His merciful purposes. We are led to this firm persuasion by the whole of God's revealed history of our race, from the beginning of creation; by the duties imposed on man, and by his final emancipation from the thraldom of sin, and triumphant deliverance from its eternal curse.

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ESSAY VIII.

"And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; there is none other commandment greater than these."—MARK xii. 31.

FIRST, then, the love of our neighbour here is not to be taken separate from the love of God, but is included in it, or flowing from it. God, whom we see not, will be loved in our neighbour whom we see; He will have us manifest our love to him by loving our neighbour for His sake. In these words we have, first the duty enjoined, which is loving our neighbour; secondly, the manner of this love, or how we are to love our neighbour, viz., as ourselves; thirdly, the resemblance betwixt this and the first and great commandment. "And the second is like unto it." I shall first endeavour to state who is our neighbour. We learn from our Saviour's sermon on the Mount, that the Jewish teachers had greatly corrupted the general commandment of the second table touching the love of our neighbour. "Ye have heard it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy." But there is not a word commanding or allowing us to hate our enemy; that was the addition of the corrupt Jewish teachers. They corrupted the text in two ways; first, by a misinterpretation

of the word neighbour, confining and restricting it to a friend or a relation; and second, by a false inference from it, that because a man must love his friend, therefore, he must hate his enemy. For though our friends and relations, and those who live near to us, are our neighbours, yet, in Scripture, enemies are called neighbours. Thus, the Egyptians are said to be neighbours to the Israelites, yet we all know that they were deadly enemies to them, (Exodus xi. 2,) "Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman borrow of her neighbour, jewels of silver and jewels of gold." But these neighbours of whom they borrowed were the Egyptians. The Samaritan, as our Saviour teaches, was neighbour to the Jew who was in distress and wounded; yet were the Jews and Samaritans enemies to one another. Therefore, by neighbour, we are here to understand mankind at large, and so every man is our neighbour.

Having seen who is our neighbour, I proceed now in the second place, to explain the great duty enjoined towards our neighbour, viz., love, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour." Now to see this duty in its full extent, I would consider it in a twofold view. First, to love our neighbour is to do no harm to our neighbour; this is the lowest sense in which we can understand the precept. Secondly, to love our neighbour is to do him all the kind and good offices we can.

First. To love our neighbour is to do him no harm; and in general I call that doing harm

to our neighbour, when we do to him what we would not have him do to us. Now the negative part of our duty towards our neighbour comprehends these things.

1st. We must not judge harshly or rashly of our neighbour. Surely we would have others judge charitably of us, and are angry with them when they do otherwise; why then should we not do the same unto them? But this matter should be stated clearly, that we may not mistake it and call rash judging which is sober and just. If I see one do a thing which is manifestly evil, charity does not oblige me to approve either of the deed or of the doer; on the contrary, you must not suffer sin to lie upon your brother, but reprove him. Nor is it rash judging to pronounce those who are manifestly living in sin to be in "the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity," for this is what the ministers of the Gospel declare every day. If I see a man living in direct contradiction to the laws of Jesus Christ, it is not rash judging to say the love of God is not in that man, but it would be very rash judging to call such a one a reprobate, and beyond the reach of the grace of God, this would be stepping up to the throne of God, and attempting to open the sealed books of his decrees, and to read out of them the fates of our fellow-men. Rash judging is, for the most part, occasioned by people's different opinions and principles with respect to religious matters; hence it prevails among none so much as among professing Christians, though it is a very great scandal to their profession. Many confine their charity

entirely to their own sect, and are extremely harsh and cruel in judging others, who are in reality better than themselves. They seem to think none are going to heaven, but those who walk in a particular path or lane which they have cut out.

2nd. We must not speak evil of our neighbour. So the Apostle James exhorts, "Speak not evil one of another." Some have a malicious pleasure in tearing open the cares of their neighbours, and exposing them to shame; they have not a heart to feel, or an eye to see, or acknowledge anything that is good or commendable about their neighbour, but if there is any blemish, they are eagle-eyed to discern it.

This is far from being the example of Jesus Christ, for when he saw anything commendable, he was sure to take notice of it; of the young man that came to him, mark what is said, "Jesus beholding him, loved him." But is there any harm of speaking evil of our neighbour, if we speak nothing but the truth? What we speak of our neighbour must be consistent with love as well as with truth; though we are to speak nothing but the truth, yet all the truth is not to be spoken at all times, or before every person. Though we speak nothing but the truth of our neighbour, yet if we speak it from malice and ill-will, on purpose to defame and make him odious, we transgress the law of charity.

Now we may reduce evil speakers into (1) false accusers, these are mentioned in the black roll. Under this character are comprehended not only false libellers and false witnesses at law,

who torment innocent people with vexatious processes, but likewise a vile set of people, who, like their father the devil, are common accusers of the brethren. Ishmael-like, their hand is against every man; rather than want a bad report of a person, they will make one out of their own heads, and lay things to the charge of their neighbours which they know to be false.

(2.) Whisperers: these in the Old Testament are called tale-bearers, "Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among the people." The word rendered tale-bearer signifies a pedlar, which fitly sets forth the character of such persons. The pedlar goes up and down the country offering his wares at every door, and never ceases travelling till he has sold them. So the tale-bearer catcheth an evil report at one house, and cannot rest till he is at some other house to tell it again. Now observe how contrary this is to a citizen of Zion, who taketh not up an evil report against his neighbour. He not only will not make up a false report against his neighbour, but when it is made up to his hand, and laid down at his feet, he will not take it up and send about as the tale-bearer does. David says, "He that worketh deceit shall not dwell with my house, he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.

(3.) Backbiters: these are mentioned along with the whisperers; they do the same evil to their neighbour's good name openly, that the whisperers do privately. At meals, and in public companies, they rail at others, either by diminishing and obscuring what is commend-

able about them, or by aggravating and magnifying their faults and failings. Thus, the head of John the Baptist is often brought in upon a charger, at the feasts and combinations of malicious backbiters. When they are merry at wine and good cheer, then religious people are brought into the conversation, as Samson was brought into the Philistines, to make sport to them. The Psalmist complains that he was made the song of the drunkard.

3rd. We must not defraud, supplant, or undermine our neighbour—that no man go beyond and befraud his brother in any matter. It is strange to consider how differently things are rated in the Word and in the world. In the world he is reckoned the best man who sees best to his own affairs, right or wrong; to impose upon a neighbour's ignorance or necessity, to over-reach him in a bargain, to supplant and undermine him, if it be done with anything of art or address, is so far from being reckoned a reproach than they who do such things, boast and glory in them. Oppression is a sin that has a multitude of cries against it, and therefore will sooner or later be revenged. The Word of God cries against it, "For the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land." "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field." "Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust not in any brother."

The world cries out against it; the unbiassed, unprejudiced spectators of oppression will cry out against it, though they have no religion,

and will be ready to applaud the justice of God, when it is executed upon the oppressors. "When the wicked perish there is shouting," says Solomon. Conscience cries against it, even the conscience of the oppressor himself; it often rises upon him with fearful challenges, when the world knows nothing about it. What a miserable night did Darius pass in his palace, after he had put Daniel into the den of lions!

2nd. To love our neighbour, is to do him no harm, but to do him all the good offices we can. As the cause is best known by its effects, and the tree by its fruits, so the love we owe to our neighbour will best be known by its effects.

1. Praying for them according to Paul's Epistle to Timothy, "I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be made for all men." The expression "first of all," not only says that prayer is a principal part of worship, but perhaps it may intimate that the concerns of God and Christ in the world, should be the first, and not the last part of our prayers, as they commonly are.

The order of petitions in the Lord's prayer, I think plainly teaches this, though most parts do not advert to it. The first three petitions are for the public interests of Christ in the world: "Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is heaven." And then follow the petitions with respect to our own particular concerns. The prayers of saints are the church's common stock, of which every member does partake; and those who

love God and mankind for Christ's sake will pray for the conversion of the ignorant and wicked world: for by this means God will be glorified, and immortal souls saved from eternal ruin.

2. We must forgive injuries and offences which have been done against us. Therefore our Lord says, "And when ye stand praying forgive if ye have ought against any, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." It is accounted a great spirit in the world to be irritable, and immediately in a rage upon the least occasion; but if we would measure greatness of spirit by the Scriptures, we shall find that is the glory of a man to pass over a transgression; and he was a king who said so. If it be asked, whether suing our neighbour at law be consistent with that love and forgiveness we owe unto him? I answer with the apostle that the law is good if a man use it lawfully; medicine is good on some occasions, whilst on others it may be pernicious: so it is with the law. And I judge that lawsuits, or processes, are not inconsistent with Christianity, or with the particular duty I am recommending, if the following things be duly observed.

(1.) That they be not commenced for trifles. It argues a litigious, wicked, and selfish disposition, to be making court pleas, and requiring oaths, for every little petty trifle that will not bear its own expense.

(2.) That they be commenced only in a just and righteous cause.

(3.) That we offer peace, and to compound the matter before we go to law. He who loves his neighbour as himself will propose terms of peace or agreement, or submit the matter to the arbitration of neutral persons rather than go to law.

(4.) That we do not harbour malice and revenge against such as we are obliged to go to law with.

3rd. We must honour them: for so the apostle exhorts. Besides the honour due to those in authority over us, or that they are now exalted above us, there is an honour due unto all men. The Jews, we are told, would not willingly tread on the smallest piece of paper in their way, lest the name of God should be on it. Whatever superstition was in this usage, apply it unto men, and it is solid religion; trample on no man.

4th. We must put the most favourable constructions on words and actions that they will bear. The charity the apostle so strongly recommends has this property among many others, that it thinketh no evil.

5th. We must relieve their necessities as occasion offers. For as the Apostle James says, "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say, depart in peace be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit." Now the general rules for charity may be reduced to three. 1. Our neighbour's necessity, distributing to the necessity of the saints; some need more, others less. Christian prudence must judge in

those cases and make a difference. 2. God's opportunity; by which I mean the occasions and opportunities, which God in the course of His providence lays before us for relieving our fellow men in want or misery. The apostle speaks of this. So long as the world contains and much misery and distress, we cannot missfrequent providential calls to sympathize with and relieve our fellow men according to our ability.

6th. We must warn, admonish, and reprove, in reference to sin. We must warn each other of snares in the way, as fellow travellers towards Zion, and we must admonish and reprove our brother and neighbour, and not suffer sin to lie upon him. If we saw men rushing upon a precipice, common humanity would teach us to warn them of their danger; so when we see men living without God in the world, walking in the broad way that leads to destruction, if we have any bowels of mercy we shall warn our fellow men to turn from the evil of their ways, lest they come to the place of torment.

Lastly. Whatsoever we would that men should do to us, let us do the same to them. This is an admirable maxim, and would make neighbours most comfortable were it duly observed. Put yourself in your neighbour's circumstances, and then what you would wish him to do to you, do you the same to him; and what you would complain of as an injury from him, be sure not to offer it to him.

We are to love our neighbour as ourself. Now this is not to be understood as if we were to love our neighbour with the same degree of love that we love ourselves, for this would be

impossible. But the analogy betwixt the love we owe to our neighbour, and that which we bear to ourselves, seems to stand in two things.

(1.) We must love our neighbour with the same sincerity that we love ourselves. My little children, let us not love in word neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth; say not to your indigent neighbour, be ye warmed and filled, and yet not give him the things that are needful for the body; this is a piece of cruel hypocrisy, yet how many are guilty of it, of whom better things might be expected.

(2.) We must love our neighbour with the constancy that we love ourselves. We always love ourselves, and we should always love our neighbour. Christ's love is constant, "Jesus loving his own that were in the world, he loved them to the end." Our love in imitation of his should be constant, and we should likewise continue in all the proper expressions and offices of love.

In the last place, let us view the importance of this second commandment, in that it is said to be like unto the first.

I. In respect to the authority of it, it has the same sanction with the first; God has interposed the very same authority for the love of our brother whom we see, as for the love of Himself whom we have not seen, and therefore, neglecting the one as well as the other, implies a contempt of his legislative authority. It is said in the commands, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

II. In respect to the comprehensiveness of it. As the love of God includes all the first table duties, or all that service we owe to God,

so the love of our neighbour comprehends all the duties of the second table. Hence the apostle says, love is the fulfiling of the law; all the law is fulfilled in one word which is this, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

III. In respect to the reward of it. The reward of both is a reward of grace and not of debt. There is a reward in both; the work is its own reward according to the Psalmist, and there is a reward for both, even eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

IV. In respect to the difficulty of it. People think it a natural and easy thing to love God. Who would not love him, say they, but unless the principle of love be implanted in us, we neither can nor will love him. The same may be said of the love of our neighbour; we will never love mankind from a right principle, and in a way acceptable to God, until it be freely given us of God. And now I shall shut up this subject in some practical improvements.

1st. To selfish souls who confine all their love, and care, and concern to themselves. They make themselves the centre, and all things else the circumference; if it be well with themselves, they care not who it go ill with, they are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph, nor for the afflictions of any in the world besides themselves.

2nd. To those who envy their neighbours for everything they possess better than themselves. The spirit that is in us lusteth to envy. Some think nothing good enough for themselves, and anything too good for their neighbours, and so they always look on them with an

invidious eye. My brethren purge this out as a piece of the old leaven, allow the great God to distribute his favours unto others in what manner and measure he pleases, without grudging or repining. If you have the love of God in you, you will likewise have a right and charitable frame of spirit towards your neighbour, and all that is his. The mischief of envy is exceeding great; it murdered righteous Abel, it sold Joseph into Egypt, and delivered Jesus Christ into the hand of Pilate to be condemned to the cross.

3rd. To those who rejoice in the calamities of their neighbours. Some are of such a waspish malignant temper, that nothing gives them so much pleasure as to hear of evil befalling others.

4th. To those who like the Jews love their friends but hate their enemies. "If ye love them which love you, what thank have you? But Christ calls you to love your enemies, and return good for evil, blessing for cursing, and prayers for persecution and dispiteful usage; you have heard that your neighbour is every one partaking of human nature, so that you love some more than others, yet you must love all and bear hatred to none.

GEORGE BEWICK.

Dudley Colliery.

ESSAY IX.

"Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," Matt. xxii., 36—39.

ADMITTING the great fact that life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel, and that the Bible it the only true standard by which to test the principles and actions of men, we have at once an ample source of information to guide us in the discharge of our duties, both to the Creator of our spirits and to our fellow creatures, whom His hands have formed. Influenced by the two great duties, which the Saviour pointed out to the inquisitive lawyer, man no longer lives for himself alone, but for the glory of his Creator, and the welfare of his race.

Since the first great duty which heaven imposes upon man can only be demonstrated by a right discharge of the second duty, it becomes at once our interest to understand the best way in which we may discharge our obligations to our fellow men. That our duty to our neighbours branches off in several directions will be readily admitted; to direct attention to these, in their several order and extent, will be the object of the following pages.

"Be you to others kind and true,
As you'd have others be to you."

1st.—Benevolence.—There are few dispositions more lovely in their manifestations than benevolence. This, when pure in its principles, prudent in its exercise, and wisely directed in its objects, is honourable to its professor, profitable to society, and acceptable to God. It is pleasing and gratifying to watch the workings and notice the plans and purposes of the benevolent mind. The history of benevolenee, in its source, its objects, and comprehensive designs, could not be read without delight and admiration; indeed, so laudable is the spirit, so noble the employment, so beautiful the character, and so blessed is the reward of benevolence, that one might suppose that men would hasten to record the conduct, and enrol the names of those illustrious persons, who, in liberal devices and benevolent acts, adorn society, and do honour to human nature. That the contrary course often exists, must, alas, be confessed; whether from motives of covetousness or indolence, too many of those who possess the power to be benevolent, exert their skill and ingenuity in framing excuses, or in actively opposing the schemes which the benevolence of more enlightened minds suggest. The sophistry and fallacy of such conduct, is readily exposed when tested by the apostolic injunction." "Having, therefore, opportunity let us do good unto all men." We have ample encouragement to the exercise of this duty, since the wisest of men has taught us that "the liberal soul shall be made fat," and he that watereth, shall himself be watered.

"Not soon provok'd, she easily forgives,
And much she suffers, as she much believes:
Soft peace she brings; where she arrives,
She builds our quiet, as she forms our lives,
Lays the rough paths of peevish nature even,
And opens in each heart a little heaven."

2nd.—Charity.—A more beautiful and comprehensive view of charity than that given by the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. xiii.), cannot well be conceived. To this view of its character the poet alludes in the preceding lines. The province of charity is not merely the dispensing of heaven's bounties, in proportion to our means, but the exercise of forbearance towards those who, from thoughtlessness or unkindness, endeavour to thwart our purposes. And since the tendency of our nature often leads us to form wrong impressions concerning our neighbours, the cultivation and exercise of this grace becomes highly necessary for our interest and the happiness of others. One half of the miseries of human life disappear before the exercise of this disposition, and the bitter strifes which have at times desolated almost every land, would never have found existence had this principle influenced our race. Whatever affects the reputation of our neighbours, nearly concerns ourselves; since we are all subject to the same vicissitudes, exposed to the same infirmities, and liable to the same misfortunes. Incentives to this god-like disposition may be found on every hand; from self-security, since the Scriptures teach us that "with what measure we mete it shall be measured to us again:" from philanthropy, since the full de-

velopment of this principle elevates man, alleviates his sufferings, and renders earth a paradise. When the necessity for benevolence no longer exists, charity abides and ends not but with eternity.

3.—Sympathy. — The mysterious element which binds sects, parties, armies, and nations and renders them one in spirit, is known to us as sympathy—that man owes to his fellow-man this principle, or disposition, is evident since we are taught "to weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice." Without it, men would become so many isolated existences, life would lose its joyousness, and this world become a weary wilderness. Its value in all life's purposes and pursuits, is indescribable; its touch is more than magical. The afflicted forget their sufferings. the poor their distresses, and the weary their burden. It has nerved the warrior, given joy to the captive, and made the desert to bloom. Nor is the power to sympathize like benevolence bounded by wealth; the kind look, the gentle word, the cordial grasp, or earnest wish, belong to all, and extend far as the limits of earth.

We have a beautiful and truthful illustration of its power, in the influence which Eva possessed over Topsy; more effective than all our precepts, more acceptable than all our wealth, is sympathy, it penetrates where no other influence can reach.

"Friendship is the only thing in the world, concerning the usefulness, of which all mankind are agreed.—CICERO.

4.—Friendship.—Friendship seems as neces-

sary an element to comfortable existence in this world as fire or water, or even air itself. Man may move along in proud solitary dignity, but his life is little better than miserable existence, without the cheering influence of friendship to him, the tree being stript of the leaves of hope and the fruit of joy.

He who would be happy here, must have friends, and he who would be happy hereafter, must have friendship with that "Friend, who sticketh closer than a brother." Friendship only deserves the name when real in its character; for while true friendship is pleasing, and exceedingly blesssed, false friendship may prove a cause of the greatest misery. Just in proportion as a good friend is sweet, a false friend is full of bitterness. "A faithless friend is sharper than an adder's tooth." It is sweet to repose our joys and griefs with those we love, but, oh how bitter, to have that support snapped, and to receive a grievous fall, as the effect of our confidence.

Fidelity is an absolute qualification in a friend; we cannot rejoice in men, unless they stand faithful to us in the hour of need. A true friend will approve himself such, by a faithful discharge of the trust reposed in him; he cannot be unjust in his dealings, or betray the secrets confided to his charge. Whoever takes advantage of his friends credulity, sincerity, or weakness, is mean and despicable, and gives the wounds from which Solomon tells us, "Every friend will depart."

Faithfulness in reproving our faults, is a certain sign of fidelity, and is a duty we expect

from a friend. Give me the man for a friend, who will, in a kind considerate manner, honestly express to my face his opinion of my weakness or error, who will come straight to my house, and say, "Sir, I perceive such and such a thing in you, which as a brother, I must tell you of;" that man proves himself my friend, since we seldom get praised, for telling people of their faults, but rather hazard for a time their dislike.

Truthfulness in a friend is of the first importance, since it lies at the foundation of all that is noble and good in character; it extends not only to our conversation, but implies integrity in business, sincerity in friendship, and earnestness in religion. No duty can be plainer, and yet no virtue is so rare. With all our charity we must admit that deceitfulness in some form or other is the most common of sins.

God has given to us the noble faculty of speech, that it might be the interpreter of our thoughts to others; hence, to attempt to deceive our neighbours is not only unworthy of our dignity as rational beings, but must be displeasing to Him who has thus endowed us. The word of God assures us, that "lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, while such as deal truly are His delight."

Finally.—Our duty to our neighbours implies an anxious solicitude for their spiritual welfare. The moral condition of those by whom we are surrounded demands our careful attention; although the age in which we live is characterized by growing light, and intelligence, the truth of the apostle still holds true, viz., "The carnal mind is enmity against God."

There is something painful and astonishing in the fact, that where human learning most flourished, idolatry most abounded. In the most polished among heathen cities—even in Athens, the centre of intellectual light in St. Paul's day—temples and altars were reared in all directions. On the altar which aroused the apostle, was inscribed the summing up of their impiety, "To the unknown god." Professing themselves wise, they became fools. Vain imaginations still exist, and the world by human wisdom know not God. In our day, and around us, idolatry still abounds, though varied in its character, to that which influenced ancient Greece.

Crowds of devoted worshippers still sacrifice at the altar of Bacchus, and with more intense and ardent zeal than characterized many of olden times. At the shrine of Mammon, man sacrifices his interest in both worlds. In the thirst for wealth, the fevered crowds rush with unholy and impatient desire; leaving along their pathway traces of their fatal and eternal ruin.

Stubborn difficulties may present themselves; opposition from the world, and controversies in the Church may affect us; but our duty is plain—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

We have noble examples of real devotion, and even self-denial, for the welfare of others; among the heathens, some protested according to their light, against the iniquities of the age in which they lived, even to death. With the superior light we profess to enjoy we cannot remain silent, unless at the expense of our con-

sistency. Our lives must bear testimony against the habitual neglect of God, and the worldly-mindedness, that characterizes this age. And since the learned as well as the illiterate forget, or overlook, the great object of their creation, it is our province by instruction, by entreaty, and reproof, to bring them to the knowledge of God. The duty of inviting our neighbours to God's house, is one which cannot be overlooked; from our intimate knowledge of the habits of those among whom we live, and from the friendly intercourse that exists between us, we have ample opportunities of bringing our neighbours within the sound of the Gospel, or, at least, inviting them as one of old,—"Come with us, and we will do you good."

That such a course will expose us to persecution and insult from "those who love not God," may be reasonably expected, since the Saviour Himself was persecuted, even to the cross, by those he sought to bless.

If we want motives to urge us to our duty we have them in the inexplicable and unbounded love of God; in the untiring devotedness and priceless death of His only Son, "who gave Himself a ransom for all," and shrunk not even from the cross; in the indefatigable and holy characters of every age, who have rested from their labours, and—

"Found the rest we toil to find,"

in the indescribable worth and immeasurable value of the immortal souls whom we seek to save; in the rich successes that have hitherto attended the efforts of the Church to the present time,

and the abundant fulness there is in Christ for lost and wretched men, and in the unutterable reward which "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, which the human heart hath not conceived," but which is laid up above by the Giver of all good, for all who love Him and seek His glory.

In conclusion, let us never forget the source of our power, to discharge successfully our duty to our fellow-man. The source of the apostle's strength must be ours,—"I can do all things through Christ Jesus, who strengtheneth me." We have the promise of God's holy Spirit; let us prayerfully and implicitly trust in Him, whose mighty power, can, and will ultimately, subdue all things to Himself.

HEDWORTH WINTER,

Post Messenger.

Ponteland.

ESSAY X.

THE grounds of moral obligation have been variously stated by various writers. The shortest and best way of solving this important question seems to be, to consider all duty as resting on the will of God. The relations which God sustains to us, give Him the right to govern us; He is our Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor. From Him we derived our existence; to Him we owe the preservation of our lives. Upon Him we depend daily for the necessaries and luxuries of life. Since, then, we have received our being, and all other blessings from God; we are His property; and because we are His property He has a right to our services.

Not only has God the right to govern, but He possesses, in a perfect degree all the qualifications of a ruler. The proper end of all government is the general good. All that is requisite for the attainment of this end is found in the supreme Being. It appears then, that man, on account of his relation to God is not at liberty to make rules for his own conduct; and were he at liberty, he is neither mentally nor morally fitted for the work. The will of an allwise and holy God is the only rule by which he can safely walk. It is necessary that he should be acquainted with that will.

Taking therefore the Bible as our guide, we proceed to the consideration of the important subject "Man's duty to his neighbour."

I. The parties to whom the duties to be considered are to be exercised, will first claim our attention.

The question is to be answered "who is my neighbour?"

The term is a Scriptural one, and from Scripture we shall endeavour to show its signification. From the manner in which it is used by the sacred writers it is evident that they do not apply it to any select number of individuals, but to the race at large. The same duties which we are commanded to exercise towards our neighbour are enjoined upon us with respect to every man. The commandment which stands in the Decalogue, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," is thus quoted by our Lord, "Thou shalt not bear false witness;" evidently meaning that false witness is not to be borne against any. St. Paul also shows the extent of this precept in his direction to Christians, "that they speak evil of no men" The great principle of love which includes all other duties is to be cherished towards all. In Lev. xix. 18. it is written "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," and in the 31st. verse of the same chapter we read, "The *stranger* that dwelleth among you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love *him* as thyself. The Jews in our Lord's time circumscribed this duty by a sophism of their own. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy," was a current maxim among them; but

Christ by His Divine command "love your," enemies," overthrew this wall of partition which human malignity had reared.

The teaching of Christianity in this, as in every other respect, is in perfect accordance with the dictates of reason, and is such as human nature in an unfallen state would have willingly complied with. There exists certain relations between *all* men; consequently, the duties which these relations involve must be exercised to all. Notwithstanding the differences, physical, intellectual, and moral, by which men may be distinguished, they are bound together by indissoluble ties.

I. They are *alike the workmanship of the Almighty.*—Much diversity of external appearance exists among the different tribes of men; but in the construction of every human form the work of Omnipotence is seen. The bodies of the prince and of the beggar, of the civilized and of the savage, of the tyrant and of the slave, are alike, "fearfully and wonderfully made;" and furnish a fitting answer to the enquiry of the prophet. "Hath not one God created us?" The mental powers with which men in common are gifted bespeak "the inspiration of the Almighty," who is the "Father of the spirits of all flesh."

2 *All men are the descendants of our common earthly parents.*—The genealogy of the meanest serf may be traced to the same head as that of the most illustrious monarch. The teeming millions of the world's population are all members of one vast family. This family it is true has been scattered to the four winds of heaven,

Changes of climate or other circumstances, have produced various shades of complexion amongst its members; but these things do not alter nature's claim. Brothers are brothers as well when age has bent their frames and shed its snows upon their heads, as when they joined together in the sports of boyhood; as well when separated by the "widest intervals of sea and land," as when they dwelt beneath the same parent roof, and sweetly slumbered in each other's arms. The bond of consanguinity unite the poorest with the most wealthy, the most obscure with the most distinguished, the benighted pagan with the enlightened Christian, the untaught Indian with the polished European. "God hath made of one blood all nations to dwell upon the face of the earth."

3.—There is also among mankind a *mutual dependence upon each other for the blessings they enjoy*. In whatever direction we look, we see our fellow-men labouring to promote our interests. The smith at his anvil, and the weaver at his loom, the carpenter at his bench, and the farmer at his plough; the man of science in his researches, the man of letters in his study, and the man of God in the pulpit, are all contributing to the common weal. Miners ransack the bowels of the earth to place its treasures at our service: mariners track the heaving ocean to bring to our shores the productions of other climes, whilst the inhabitants of distant lands are continually engaged in preparing for us the comforts and luxuries of life. From these considerations, it will appear that the scriptural claims, for the performance of the various

duties to all men without exception, are well founded. And here we may remark, that this conformity of the teachings of the Bible to the facts just adduced, affords evidence in favour of its being the book of God. In no other system of philosophy or religion, have the claims of humanity been so fully recognised, as in the Christian volume; all other systems bear marks of those narrow-minded and exclusive notions of duty, which are so common among mankind; but the religion of the Bible makes the whole world akin, and teaches us to regard as our neighbour every individual of the species, without distinction of country, character, or condition.

II.—We next proceed to the enumeration of the duties, which man owes to his neighbour. These duties will be stated on the sole authority of Scriplure; we shall also endeavour to point out some of the consequences proceeding from the performance or omission of them.

If we succeed in proving that general attention to the duties laid down in the Bible, would be productive of results the most beneficial, while the neglect of them is the unfailing source of misery; the faith of the Christian in this good old book will be strengthened, and a reason will be shown why the sceptic should cast away his doubts, and adopt it as his guide.

We shall place these duties under four general heads, the first of which that we name is Truth.

1.—Upon this subject the will of God is very explicitly declared; a strict adherence to truth is required of men in all their intercourse

with each other. Direct commands binding this duty upon men are very numerous in the Word of God. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour;" "Speak ye every man truth to his neighbour." The will of God in this matter thus clearly laid down, and thus strongly enforced by precept, promise, and threatening is violated among mankind in various ways. The law of truth is broken whenever a false impression is intentionally made; this may be done by words, by actions, and even by silence. The use of false signs so often practised in war, the giving to inferior articles of merchandise a name or appearance of superior quality, so common in the commercial world, the non-fulfilment of promises when such fulfilment is in the power and agreeable to the conscience of the promiser, are all violations of this rule.

The utility of this Scriptural law will be readily seen. With what a flood of misery have deceitful practices deluded the world. They have created mistrust and jealousy between dearest friends; they have snapt the ties of affection which bound man and wife; they have alienated brother from brother, often causing, as in the case of Jacob and Esau, years of estrangement and deadly hate. False promises have lured many to their ruin. The tongue of slander has blighted many a blooming prospect and saddened many a hopeful heart; it has robbed numbers of that which is better than riches.

"Good name in man and woman,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls;

Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, nothing,
T'was mine; 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he that filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed."

2.—The second general duty which we purpose to consider, is Justice.

Justice among men may be defined as the rendering to each other their mutual rights.

Life is a right given by God to man, and secured to him by the Divine law; it is guarded by the ancient injunction given to the sons of Noah, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed;" and by the commandment in the decalogue, "Thou shalt not kill." Murder is spoken of by our Saviour and His Apostles as a crime of the greatest enormity; it is included in the black catalogue of offences given by St. Paul, and respecting which he says, "Those that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." "Murderers have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." The same guilt is attached to the principle from which the crime springs as to the act itself, "Whoso hateth his brother is a murderer." The only cases in which human life is innocently taken appear to be the following. When death is inflicted by government as a punishment for a crime to which death alone is adequate. In war when undertaken on justifiable grounds, such as the defence of national liberty, or the repelling of an invader; and lastly when it is necessary for the protection of our own lives.

The promulgation of this law in all its stringency, is needed to restrain the violent passions of men. Notwithstanding that it has been given, and that with the most solemn enforcements, the conduct of mankind has in all ages betrayed a fearful disregard of human life; when as yet, the laws of nature had not reduced a form to corruption, man, impatient to yield grim death a victim, stained the earth with his brother's blood. The tempter has sown the seeds of hatred in the human heart, and this act of patricide was the first fruit of the bloody harvest, which he since has reaped. Murder is the revenge that men have taken for the most trivial offences; blood had been freely shed for the attainment of every object which avarice or ambition has desired. The hand of the assasin has slaughtered sleeping innocence, massacred lovely women, and drenched the hoary head with gore. Wars, undertaken by savage chieftains, and imperial butchers, have from time to time devastated our globe. It has been calculated by an intelligent writer that "More than fourteen thousand millions of human beings have been slaughtered in war since the beginning of the world," which "is equivalent to the destruction of eighteen worlds of the same population as ours." What a fearful violation of the Divine precept, "Thou shalt not kill." How many homes have the wholesale slaughters filled with mourning, and how many hearts with grief?

"Man's inhumanity to man
Made countless thousands mourn."

2. A second right to which justice has regard

is liberty. There are circumstances under which men may be justly deprived of their liberty. The madman, whose being permitted to go at large might endanger his own life or the lives of others, may be placed under restraint. Those who violate the just laws of their country are very properly confined in prison, because to leave them free to disturb the peace of society would be an infringement on the rights of others. Hence we find that the Scriptures support governors in the exercise of their prerogative in these matters. But all interference with men's liberty by individual authority is strictly forbidden. Man stealing is ranked by the apostle Paul amongst the worst of crimes. Under the Mosaic dispensation, it was punishable with death. "He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his possession, he shall surely be put to death" (Ex. xxi. 12). These passages, we think, sufficiently stamp the Divine displeasure upon modern slavery at least. In the following quotation from an American divine, this is clearly made out:—"This," viz., man-stealing, "is the common way in which men are made slaves. Some, indeed, are taken in war, and sold as slaves; but the mass of those who have been reduced to servitude have become slaves by being kidnapped. None become slaves voluntarily, and consequently the whole process of making slaves partakes of the nature of theft of the worst kind."—*A. Barnes.*

Any system more at variance with Christianity than slavery can scarcely be imagined. To reduce our fellow-men to the condition of beasts of burden, to treat them as mere goods

and chattels, and yet to profess that religion which commands us to do to others as we would they should do unto us, is a strange anomaly. Let us thank God that England has wiped this foul stain from her escutcheon, and that her dominion is one vast asylum from the tyrant's grasp.

Liberty of conscience is also defended by the sacred writers. In the propagation of Christianity, moral suasion was the only means used by the inspired apostles. St. Paul's direction was, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." In writing to Christians, he encouraged the exercise of free inquiry, by exhorting them to "prove all things." The Bereans were recommended not because they rendered the assent of credulous ignorance to the teachings of the apostles, but because they investigated the doctrines for themselves. They "searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

The spirit of intolerance has checked the exercise of thought, and shut out the light of knowledge from the understandings of men. Those who have been bold enough to refuse compliance with its dictates, it has consigned to the gaol, the gibbet, or the stake. This spirit it was that lighted the fires of Smithfield, and invented the tortures of the inquisition; which shed the blood of the Waldenses in the valleys of Piedmont, and of the Covenanters on the hills of Scotland.

Were the Divine will, in this respect, universally complied with among men, a blessing of immense value would be the reward of their

obedience. The inhabitants of African villages would no longer be disturbed in their peaceful slumbers by the nocturnal invasions of the man-stealer. In America alone the fetters would fall from three millions of ebon captives. The youthful progeny of these emancipated negroes would exchange a sad allotment of degrading bondage for the bright prospect of a life of liberty. When seated at our festive boards, we should have the satisfaction of reflecting that no backs had smarted for the luxuries we enjoyed.

A third right, in the possession of which justice protects men, is property. Upon this point, also, the injunctions of Scripture are numerous and explicit. One of the precepts of the law given on Sinai was, "Thou shalt not steal" (Ex. xx. 15). Akin to this are the following passages:—"Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him" (Lev. xix. 11, 13). "That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter" (1 Thess. iv. 6). "Let him that stole steal no more" (Eph. iv. 28). The Divine vengeance is threatened upon all who are disobedient to this rule. "The unrighteous shall not enter the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. vi. 9). "The curse goeth forth, ... and it shall enter into the house of the thief" (Zech. v. 3, 4). Not only the act of theft, but the disposition of heart in which it originates, is condemned in the Word of God: "Thou shalt not covet." Covetousness is theft in embryo, consequently, the crimes are the same in nature, though they differ in degree. The Scriptures are frequent and stern in their denunciations of

covetousness, because it occupies a leading place in the corruptions of man's nature, and has been to a great extent his guide in his dealings with his fellowmen. The records of thefts, either on a larger or a smaller scale, form a considerable portion of the history of our race. This crime has created endless distress, mistrust, and contentions among men. The inordinate love of money, which, it is to be regretted, so strongly characterizes the age in which we live, is a fruitful source of theft in its various forms amongst us. We have need to write "upon the posts of our houses, and on our gates," the Divine commands, "Thou shalt not steal," "Thou shalt not covet;" and were phylacteries in vogue amongst us, these would form inscriptions fitting for the times.

The third class of duties which we propose to consider comes under the head of mercy. Not only are we commanded "to do justice," but also "to love mercy." Among this class comes the *forgiveness of injuries.* "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him" (Luke xvii. 3). "And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you" (Eph. iv. 32). According to our performance of this duty is to be our expectation of mercy at the hands of God. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you" (Matt. vi. 15).

Under this head are also included *acts of beneficence.* We are bound to promote, so far as we are able, the temporal welfare of our

fellowmen. They are the subjects of wants which we may relieve, and of afflictions which we may soothe. Poverty is the lot of multitudes of our race. They have not those comfortable places of abode which are so necessary to health and happiness. The duty of supplying, so far as in us lies, the necessities of these sons and daughters of poverty, is very strongly enforced in Scripture: "If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand, from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need in that which he wanteth." (Deut. xv. 7, 8).

Such are the directions given to the Israelites in Deut. xxiv. 19-22, with respect to the gathering in of the fruits of the earth. The forgotten sheaf of corn in the field, the olive-berries left on the tree, and the cluster of grapes in the vineyard, were not to be gleaned by the proprietor, but to be left for "the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow."

Man is also the subject of many bodily pains and infirmities. His body was formed to be the vehicle of enjoyment. His senses were intended to be only the avenues of pleasure. But sin has defeated, to a considerable extent, this gracious design, and has rendered man's body the source of many a pang.

"Sharp and numerous are the ills
Inwoven with his frame."

This world of ours resembles a vast hospital.

On every hand we behold the victims of the varied "ills that flesh is heir to." Here the fever burns, and there the palsy shakes. Here we see consumption doing its work of sadness, robbing beauty of its bloom, and reducing to langŭor and debility the once robust form; there the cripple, by painful efforts, drags along his disfigured limbs. Now we meet with the deaf mute, a stranger to the charms of music, and shut out from the blessings of conversation; and now with the blind, groping his bewildered way, never privileged to gaze on nature's splendid panoramas, never gladdened by affection's smile.

Christian charity regards man as an intellectual as well as a material being; hence its efforts will also be directed to the supply of his mental cravings. It will seek to diffuse knowledge by every means within its reach. The establishment of efficient schools for the education of the young, the circulation of cheap and useful books, the delivering of instructive lectures, are so many means of accomplishing this end.

But man is to be viewed in an aspect more important than either of the foregoing, namely, as a moral and immortal being, "The life that now is, is but the prelude to another of infinitely longer duration. Hence any efforts to promote man's interests, must take into account the future and eternal state of existence to which he is destined. That is a short-sighted philanthropy which seeks only the temporal well-being of our race. "The soul of charity is charity to the soul.

The first question on this subject which proposes itself to the lover of the species, is, "what does man need in order to his eternal happiness?" The answer to this question must guide him in his labours of benevolence. The word of God informs us that holiness or moral purity is that which alone can fit man for future and unending bliss. Scripture, sadly confirmed by observation and experience, also teaches us that the condition of our world is one of moral degradation, that owing to a sad lapsation from its original rectitude, human nature is void of holiness. Having thus ascertained what is needful for the happiness of a future state, and having seen that man does not possess the required qualification, the next question is, "How is that qualification to be obtained?" Thank God we are not in the dark here. The same book that testifies of man's fall, tells of the plan for his restoration. It points to a fountain in which he may wash out his stains of guilt and of inbred sin, and thus be made pure in heart, that he may see God and dwell in his presence for ever. The Gospel of Christ is the world-wide remedy for sin, the world's great disease.

Such is the large-hearted charity which the Bible inculcates; we need only look at its mission to see that its diffusion would be a blessing to the world. It goes forth to do good to the bodies and to the souls of men, to light up bright smiles of gladness on the face of the disconsolate, and to wipe away the tear from the mourner's eye, to raise men from the depths of ignorance and sin, and to place them on the

heights of knowledge and of God-like purity.

Were this charity prevalent in the world, the wants of the indigent would be liberally supplied. Kind hands would ever be ready to minister to the subject of affliction, and they would find in the sympathy of those around them, a balm for these wounds of woe. Ignorance would be dispelled by the spreading light of knowledge. Christianity would extend her peaceful conquests with a rapidity unknown before. She would go on winning souls until the whole family of man was gathered into the happy household of faith. Works of benevolence yield also a pleasure to those who are engaged in them, to which the selfish heart is a stranger. Truly has the poet sung of mercy—

"It is twice blessed
It blesses him that gives, and him that takes."

IV. We proceed lastly to consider the great duty, or rather the great principle which leads to the performance of all duties, namely love. This great parent duty stands prominently forth in the Word of God; like a golden chain it runs through the entire system of revelation. Is has been observed that the law of love is to the intelligent universe, what the law of attraction is to the material. The latter binds together the countless particles of matter which compose our world, and keeps it with all the other planets in their appointed orbits around the sun, preventing them from running lawlessly though the voids of space. The former binds men in a sympathetic union, and causes them

with all other rational beings, to revolve in harmony and beauty around God the great centre of the intelligent system.

The diffusion of love is the grand object of the Christian religion. The angels at the nativity of Christ sang not only glory to God, but of goodwill towards men. As already intimated, this sublime affection embodies all duties, and its existence in the hearts of men secures their fulfilment. Upon the two commandments, requiring love to God, and love to man, hang all the law and the prophets. Upon the one hang all the duties we owe to God, upon the other all that we owe to our fellow-men. In accordance with this, St. Paul affirms that all the commandments are briefly comprehended in this saying, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," and that love is the fulfilling of the law. It excludes all malevolence, for love worketh no ill to his neighbour. Hence it banishes deceit and injustice of every kind; it involves a desire to promote the welfare of all men. Hence it leads to the performance of all those acts of charity numerated in the preceding chapter.

This principle upon which the right fulfilment of all duty depends, can only be implanted and matured in the heart by God. There is an innate selfishness in human nature which leads man to look upon his own things and not upon the things of others, which places his own gain before him as the only object to be sought after. To correct this feeling Divine grace is requisite. Love is mentioned in Scripture as "the fruit of the Spirit," the result of

the new birth. Love to God our heavenly Father is the first feeling that takes possession of the renewed heart, leading as a natural consequence to the love of all his offspring. All genuine philanthropy must be the fruit of Christian principles; this is attested not only by the teachings of the Bible, but also by the history of mankind. The successful efforts of John Howard and Elizabeth Fry to reform the prison discipline of Europe, were the results of deep and fervent piety. What system but Christianity could have incited John Wesley to his arduous labours to promote the spread of truth among the degraded masses of our countrymen? What but this could have induced multitudes of men to give up the comforts of home, to visit barbaric lands for the good of their benighted inhabitants?

We have thus enumerated the duties we are called upon to perform to all men, and have shown that the grace necessary to their performance is attainable at the hand of God.

The desolations of sin shall disappear, and the beauties of holiness be seen. The harsh sounds of discord shall give place to the music of heaven. Those sinless beings who have so long regarded man with the love of pity, shall look upon him with the love of approbation. In their visits to our race they will have the pleasure of mingling with kindred spirits. God, viewing from his throne of glory a renovated world, shall pronounce it, as in the beginning, to be very good.

W. M. K.

ESSAY XI.

"It is not good that man should live alone," is the reason assigned, for the creation of an helpmeet, for the progenitor of the human race. All earthly beings were too far beneath him; and the heavenly were too exalted, for the fellowship that his medium nature required. His Creator, although a loving parent, was also a ruler and a judge. Communion with the Almighty, consisted then, as it does now, of praise, and prayer, and humble adoration. There was something else needed, for the full exercise of all the powers of man. The social side of his nature had as yet no sphere of exercise; it had no "helpmeet," and he had no companion.

Felicitous companionship can only exist among equals. But man had no equals. He was lord of all the earth, or the dependent of heaven. His purest emotions found no resting place between earth and heaven. His nature could only be partially developed; his happiness only in part secured; until he experienced those mutual affections which make life—even beyond the gates of Eden—so sweet, and pure, and holy. Eden itself would not have been a paradise without an Eve; and, therefore, the benevolent Creator gave her as the consummation of man's felicity, and the crowning glory of His own creative work. She came; and her

influence like the breath of zephyrs on Æolian lyre, swept over the chords of man's nature, that had hitherto been silent, until they vibrated with purest harmony. Henceforth the service of God, comprehended within it the service of humanity. New relations had sprung up, involving new duties, and man found closely allied to his primal duty to God, a second, rendered sacred, and more binding, from its association with the first—it was his duty to his fellow man.

From that time, there was a sequel to the command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might;" and it became, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, *and thy neighbour as thyself*." But some one "willing to justify himself," or for other more commendable reasons, asks, "Who is my neighbour?"

This is a sensible question, though the motive which prompted the lawyer to put it to our Saviour, may not deserve our approbation. It is a proper question, because the terms of preceptive teaching should be distinctly defined, so that they may be properly applied in practice. The answer that Christ gave to the enquiry was as plain as it was beautiful, and we accept it for our guidance, through the following pages.

The generally received meaning of the word "neighbour," is not so comprehensive as that which the story of the good Samaritan involves. We, therefore, add to that general acceptation, that *he is our neighbour whom we perceive to be*

in need of assistance, or any beneficial service which we are able to give. We do not admit nationality, race, or creed, as limitations, but as general regulators of our love to men. We approve of the general practice which gives priority to those of our own nation over a foreigner; and which acknowledges, that those with whom we are most intimately acquainted by residence in a particular locality, or as being members of our own family, have the first and most urgent claim on our service. But the kindness which we show to those of our own household or country, ought also to be shown to the unfortunate stranger, whose lot it may be to need our good offices, when our means and opportunities allow us to give them. National prejudices, and local and family attachments, should be held somewhat in abeyance, or emerged in the more universal feeling of benevolence, in presence of the friendless, the suffering, and the destitute. To confine our love and sympathy within the family circle, or a nation's frontier, would sink the moral nature into sickly, dwarfish selfishness. It is when man's love encircles the whole human family, that his nature reaches the earthly limits of its expansion, and approaches nearest to the perfection of divinity.

Having given the above preface, partly explanatory, and partly introductory, we proceed to consider, as well as our feeble powers will allow us, the subject of our essay, "Man's *duty* to his neighbour."

All our duties may be said to be moral, because we are accountable for all our voluntary

actions to the moral governor of the universe; but we use certain terms to distinguish the duties we owe to man, as a member of the same community with ourselves; and those we owe to him, merely as an individual agent, and as an equal. The first, we call *social and political duties;* the second, *moral and religious duties.*

We shall attempt to point out as well as we can, first, "*Man's social duties to his neighbour.*" In the daily intercourse of men, there are certain modes of conduct that are sometimes thought trivial and unimportant, but which are really necessary to the smooth progress of society in intelligence and morality. We refer to civility and courtesy.

Men should be *courteous* to their neighbours. Rude, uncouth manners, though not always resulting from ignorance or depravity, are generally indicative of one or the other. Courtesy should be shown in friendly conversation, gentle advice, and mutual help, either by intellectual or physical means. Where one possesses more knowledge than another, there should be a willingness to communicate it. To do so without the offensiveness of a pedant, or coxcomb, or the harshness of a pedagogue, but as a friend and a brother, is what all men should strive to accomplish. Friendly conversation on subjects of political, religious, or local interest, tends to develope the powers of the mind, and improve the character. By this means, error may be corrected, information communicated, and truth announced without the appearance of a censor, or the stiffness of a tutor. A kind, obliging disposition, smooths down the sharp

angularities of life, and softens it into an expression of delightful symmetry; while the sullen, irascible temper, becomes wearisome and tedious, until by the violence of its own motions, it is made powerless to move the thoughts or feelings of any. To help this union amongst themselves, men should

"Use hospitality one to another."

In all ages hospitality has been practised as a virtue, and by some nations has been deemed the most sacred duty of man. It was much practised in the patriarchal ages, and in a far later age, when even the foxes of the field and the birds of the air seemed less despised than the apostles of truth; the hospitality of strangers was a condition of the spread of the Gospel. The men who changed the whole aspect of the earth, were to "provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in their purses," but "into whatsoever city or town they entered, they were to enquire who in it was worthy, and there abide" until they left the place.

At the present day an Arab of the desert will provide food for man and beast, and lodging such as he can give to the stranger who asks for it at the tent door in the evening, and will conduct him safely on his journey in the morning, although that same Arab might have slain and robbed his guest, had he met him, before he sought for protection. So sacred does he esteem the person of an hostage.

The "Pharoah who knew not Joseph," may be said to have violated this duty, when he oppressed and enslaved the descendants of that Israel, whose son, by his wisdom, saved for a

time the empire of Egypt and the splendour of her Pharoahs. The Jewish beggars of the former time, had left to Egypt's ruler a legacy of dread and terror, in the fruitfulness of their sons and daughters. The fear that a people should wake to a consciousness of its inherent strength, cowed, while it hardened, the heart of the king; and the rigour of his rule increased, and the tasks of the Israelites grew more severe. The same cause has produced similar effects often enough since then. But to pass on. The cry of the oppressed people rose to heaven, and was answered by a mightier than earthly kings. By a mysterious pathway, over obstacles insuperable to finite power, the Lord of Hosts led them from the brick kilns of Egypt to the wilderness of Shur, from the house of bondage to the land of freedom.

In a country, where prosperity and comfort is the rule, and destitution and misery the exception, this duty does not seem so important as it does to those who live in less propitious circumstances. But we should remember, that the fathers of our civil and religious liberty were once strangers; that their hearts were cheered by the hospitality of a darker age, that by it they were urged to struggle on in the path of truth, and ultimately to triumph. Amongst friends, the practice may be kept up as a means of increasing happiness.

Assistance in time of distress and affliction.—All men are subject to trouble; the distress which is another's to-day, may be our's to morrow. A consciousness of this should cause us cheerfully to lend a helping hand in time of

affliction or difficulty; pecuniary help, when it is needed, should not be withheld. Riches are given to bless, but if man neglects his duty, and hoards them while his brother man is in want of their aid, they become a curse. In such a case wealth is the food of avarice, and as it increases, so does the detestable sordid desire.

When circumstances prevent the gift of pecuniary aid, personal service might be afforded. Misfortune confuses the mind, and often entirely unnerves a man. At such a time men might help each other by counsel, influence, or labour, and thus soothe the perplexity, and cheer the soul of the afflicted or unfortunate. It is time then for the kind-hearted to begin a "labour of love." If they cannot give silver and gold, they may give their service, their prayers, and holy counsels. They may thus soothe the wounded spirit, or soften the pillow of the dying body. Men will sometimes say in the beautiful words of inspired poetry, "affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground," and from this, read lessons on the duty of patient endurance to the suffering and bereaved. This is good no doubt, but consider, is there no more? May not affliction have a further design than the sufferer's chastisement? May not thy neighbour's affliction be an opportunity an all-wise Providence is giving thee to discharge that most important duty of ministering to the sick and afflicted? Is it not a chance offered to thee, of better preparation for the enjoyment of that state, where "all sorrow and sighing shall flee away?"

The relations of masters and servants.—Masters should be kind, courteous, civil, and just to their servants, and why? Because their interests are reciprocal. The same may be said to servants; they should be kind, courteous, civil, and just to their masters, and for the above-named reason. A slothful servant may make a harsh master—a hard task-master will never make a faithful or diligent servant. Injustice is most frequently on the side of wealth and power. The consciousness of power is a pleasant, and often delightful feeling. We get glimpses of evidence tending to prove this, in the infant who has made its first journey without the aid of leading strings. It laughs and crows in delight, as it clings to a chair or some other piece of furniture, or supports itself in security between the knees of its parent.

But servants should be faithful to their employers; not striving to please by mere show, but by just service. And masters should endeavour to secure this by kind and respectful treatment of those who serve them. In many occupations, man is almost brought to the conditions of the brutes; he eats, works, and sleeps, and no more. To do more is impossible, without violating the laws of his physical constitution. The sweating and late hour systems are a curse, the messengers of death to thousands. In the commercial world the wretchedness is fearful; in rural districts the misery is nearly as great. The wealthy land-owner luxuriates in all the abundance of the fruits of the earth, while the peasant, on whose labour that luxury depends, is often ground as low as the soil he ultivates, of whose produce he gets but a

scanty share. The manufacturer gains the title of "merchant prince," while the efforts of the unthought-of artisan, whose skill and industry have raised his master to the royalty of wealth, are rewarded by a pittance, small, fitful, and uncertain.

The poor seamstress with her wan face, transparent fingers, and bent form, pining over "seam and gusset and band," or tracing brilliant ornamentation over the surface of silk, or satin, or kingly purple, while the light dies out from her eyes, and the death pallor creeps over her countenance, weeps, groans, and dies, because her favoured sister is thoughtless or heartless to her sufferings.

> "O God, that bread should be so dear,
> And flesh and blood so cheap."

Honesty and Justice in commerce.—"A false balance is abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is His delight," so said the royal sage of Israel. All men profess to approve the latter, and abhor the former. But, dishonesty may be perpetrated without "a false balance;" in these latter days, dishonesty has become more insinuating, and less easily detected. It wears the garb of honesty, and thus deceives the trustful and unthinking. Competition, which has done so much good, has given rise to many evils, and one of them is sham-trading. Men distrust each other; the seller suspects the buyer of avarice, the buyer gives the seller credit for the same disposition, and on those terms they meet. Tempting baits are presented by the tradesman to the public; allured by these, the careful or

covetous make purchases, on the faith of receiving goods equal to sample, and are often sadly mistaken. We fear there is too much of a desire to take undue advantage on both sides. This should not be. Were men as interested in each other's welfare as their nature and relations demand, this grasping, greedy spirit, would not be developed. It is too true, that in the ordinary conduct of business, selfishness, and not truth or honour, is the governing principle. The grand aim is to drive a bargain with a handsome profit at all hazards.

Adulteration of food, and other sinful schemes, are daily practised, to enable men to become speedily rich; though at the expense of their own souls, and their neighbour's pockets and health. This haste to be rich, we fear, will cause many to run out of breath, ere half the journey of life is traversed. In these days, the words are true, "he that maketh haste to be rich, *shall not* be innocent.

Men run after happiness, and think to find it in gold, and temporal honors. But wealth is often a phantom, an evil genius, that lures men from the path of rectitude, into the dark region of guilt, there to leave them, with the agonies of remorse, and the terrors of impending judgment. Heaven's blessings are not the reward of wealth, or greatness, but of righteousness and purity.

Political and legal Justice.—Justice is the natural right of all men. Political justice is the right of all citizens. In the eye of the law, all men are equal: it recognises no arbitrary distinctions,—men are men only. In our courts,

happily, we do not find much cause for dissatisfaction, at the administration of the law. The days of Jeffreys are past; venal judges are among the phenomena of a former age. There may, perhaps, be now and then, evidence of a hankering reverence for wealth in the outskirts of our great tribunals; but, it is only seldom evinced in a neglect of justice.

There is much more room for doubt in the political world. Substantial political justice, we believe, is not done to the mass of the people. Class antagonisms have alienated the hearts of men to their fellows; and from selfish fear or misanthropic heartlessness, one class denies another the benefits enjoyed by itself.

Thousands of industrious, intelligent men, are taxed and governed by laws they have no voice in making; because wealth, and not intelligence or morality, is the passport to legislative power.

The manhood of this nation requires an answer to the respectful demand for a share of political power. The legislature will act wisely if they accede to it.

Some object to enfranchise the working classes, because of their intemperance and ignorance. A great author, in his capacity of statesman, said, a short time ago, that by giving the franchise to the working classes, power would be given to "poverty-stricken, insensate numbers." In the name of the working classes, we repel the libel. We say nothing of the harsh, "*insensate*" language, the polished orator has chosen to utter. It is a libel on the people of this country, who were asking, in the

modest language of parliamentary petitions, for a recognition of their services and position.

Nations to be great and free, must be intelligent and virtuous, we know; but they must be free, or ever they will be wise and good. Bondage is demoralising to men; freedom ennobles what it emancipates.

Religious Toleration.—Perhaps in no cause, but in that of religious propangandism or defence, has man gone to such excesses of injustice and cruelty. The fiercest persecutions have been persecutions by religionists. Only those who regard truth less than sectarian honours, will attempt to conceal or deny this. It is a fact, substantiated by all history, and has been no puny weapon in the hands of the enemies of all religion. The intolerant multitude who cried "Crucify Him, crucify Him;" the fierce persecution that peopled the catacombs of Rome; the hellish torments of a "bloody Mary;" the ribald savagery of the troopers, who made Scotland a house of mourning, are all pointed to as examples of the effects of religion. But these are no arguments against religion as such. Rightly understood, they show how powerful religious sentiment is, and the utility of having the mind under its influence.

But what *is* man's duty in reference to the religious opinions of his neighbour? He should be tolerant of them. It is unjust, to say nothing its being uncharitable, to despise, or otherwise injure your neighbour, because of his religious belief. If his creed tends to subvert the authority of a government, or breeds politi-

cal feuds, or is inimical to virtue and order in society, it of course should be dealt with by the civil power; but no individual in his private capacity has a right to inflict a penalty, or in any way obstruct the religious exercises of another, merely because they do not harmonize with his notions. Nor is a law justifiable which subjects to punishment those who differ conscientiously in their methods of worship from the forms recognized by that law. Modes of worship are of human invention; while worship itself is the free expression of the nature God has given to man. In matters of ritual, reason must guide. Reason may lead in divers ways, without directing to *opposite* ones. The paths may *end* as they begin—at one point.

Part II.—*Compassion.*—This feeling supposes distress in the object which causes it. There is much occasion for it in the state of mankind. All are exposed to misfortune, disease, and death. The moan of pain and the wail of sorrow are ever rising to heaven. The bedside of the afflicted is a valuable school. Besides the exercise of our better nature to which compassion leads, it would place us in favourable conditions for gaining a proper estimate of human life. Affliction is a great leveller. Sympathy "makes the whole world kin." We therefore urge you to cultivate and not to stifle the compassion for your neighbour. Never hesitate to act the Samaritan's part. Forget all individual or party differences. Lay aside national and sectarian prejudices. Not of the Priest's or the Levite's, but of the Samaritan's conduct was it said, "Go thou and do

likewise." And to the authority of that command, and in harmony with it, there is your own natural impulses pressing you to your duty. Listen and *obey*.

Faithfulness.—Man should never break faith with his neighbour. Promises when made should not wilfully be broken. To be faithful a man must guard his tongue. Rash promises are the forerunners of much unhappiness, disappointment and disaster. No promise should be made to deceive a neighbour. To the general consequences of broken vows they add the crime of deception. The terms of a promise should be understood by the contracting parties. This we fear is often wilfully neglected. Domestic misery and public disaster are often the fruit of faithless conduct.

Faithfulness in judging of a neighbour's character should be our aim. Exaggeration, either of praise or blame, should be avoided. The last is essentially mischievous. Where open censure is not absolutely demanded, it is better to hold our peace.

Gratitude is an emotion which arises on the perception and appreciation of a benefit bestowed on ourselves by another. We believe it is always felt, in some degree, by those who have had a want supplied, by an individual on whom they had no legal or obvious natural claim.

It is probably true, that we do not like the feeling of obligation, and therefore, instead of cherishing the grateful recollections of favours received, we allow them to fade from the memory, unheeded. Or, perhaps, that inde-

pendence of character, which so exalts a man when it is properly developed, may—if undisciplined, and left to assert itself in its native ruggedness—take the form of indifference to, or impatience of, obligations to another. Certain it is, that there are men to be found who will tell you, as an excuse for their want of gratitude, that their benefactors have only done ther duty, and have no claim for return of any kind from them.

Reward is the spring of human action. It is an important element in God's moral government, and is necessary to all schemes for regulating human conduct. Men are rewarded for doing well, because they are capable of doing ill, and the converse.

In one sense, gratitude is a reward, and as such should always be given to those who have benefited us.

By allowing pride, or any other feeling, to overcome our gratitude, we may throw an icy chill round a heart, which might otherwise be the fountain of many fertilizing streams of beneficence. It is our duty to cherish this emotion, that it may not fail to rise on every proper occasion.

Benevolence.—It is our duty to cherish the feeling of goodwill towards *all* men. Anger and malice must be overcome. Malevolence, when cherished, becomes a disease that is a cause of constant torment to its victim. It impairs the mental vision as jaundice does the bodily eye, and all within its prospect is tinged by its sombre hues.

Prompted by benevolence, the good and true

among men have performed deeds of charity, whose renown will reverberate through all time. The great Exemplar of benevolence inaugurated his mission by "healing the sick," instructing the ignorant blessing the poor, and forgiving the penitent in heart.

They who would be dutiful children of the universal Father, must act like him. "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Every time the feeling is embodied in action, the mind becomes more susceptible to its influence. Therefore every opportunity for doing good should be used. If help is needed, give it. If you have a moral precept in your head, and a shilling to spare in your pocket, give both if you choose. The moral truth may be set forth in language, melodious as a poem, but the ring of the metal will have more charm for the needy sufferer. A wholesome loaf given with a smile to a starving family, is a more powerful moral restorative, than a harsh rebuke from under a frown. Men generally think that good, which supplies their immediate wants.

Forgiveness of Injuries.

This is, perhaps, the most difficult duty of man. It has been said, "revenge is sweet," thus intimating how well it accords with the temper of mankind to return "evil for evil." But we are commanded to "overcome evil with good." Some will ask, "can this be done?" We answer, yes. What mean those beautiful words of prayer which should ascend daily from the altar of every household, "Forgive us our

trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us?" They are strong remembrancers of our duty to "bear and forbear." They tell us that we are our own priests. Through God's free grace our sins against Him are to be remitted, according as we grant forgiveness to our offending brother.

Who, but a recluse passes a day without being offended by his neighbour? Well, do not forgive those offences, and you have almost perpetual unhappiness. But forgive, and there is no more offence. Cancel the injury, and the unhappiness ceases. Not only this, but happiness is produced. To forgive our neighbour is the highest effort of virtue, and virtue and happiness are related as cause and effect. Your eternal destiny will be determined by it, whatever its present consequence in the eyes of men. Your business is "to work out your own salvation" by God's help. You cannot tell what the example of forgiving your neighbour may effect on those around you. Affection can only be expressed by actions. Our love to God is best shown by loving and *serving* our neighbour, because we are commanded "not to love in word, neither in tongue, *but in deed and in truth.*"

D. Y. N.